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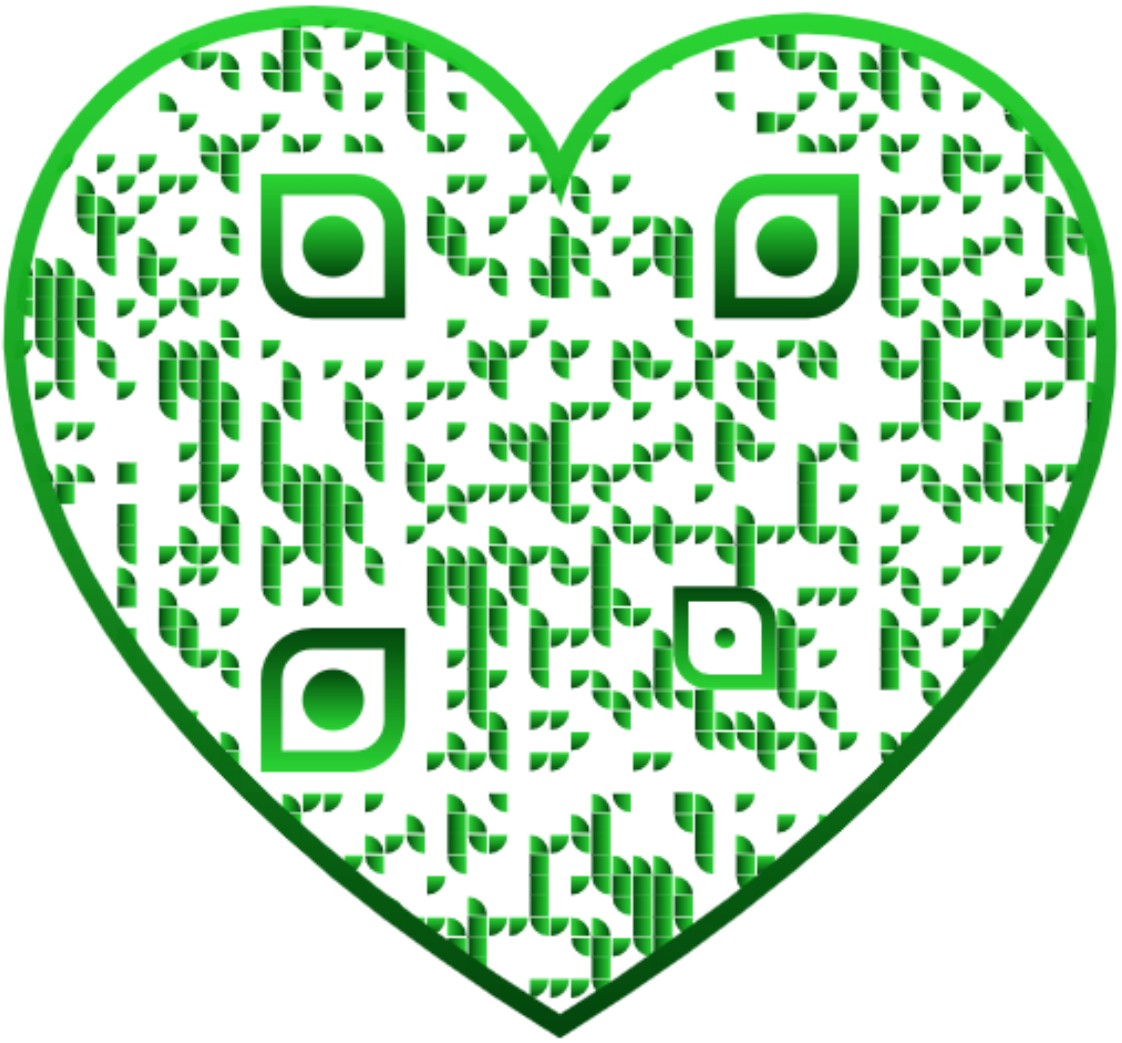

TIMELESS TALENT

"If I live a long time, and I think I might, I'll always sing," says the star, who turns 75 in January. "My voice ain't going at all."

CENTENNIAL SPOTLIGHT®

DOLLY

Queen OF COUNTRY

72

"I never age because my mind is always open. So I guess if my mind ain't old, my body ain't either."

DOLLY, TO GOLDMINE

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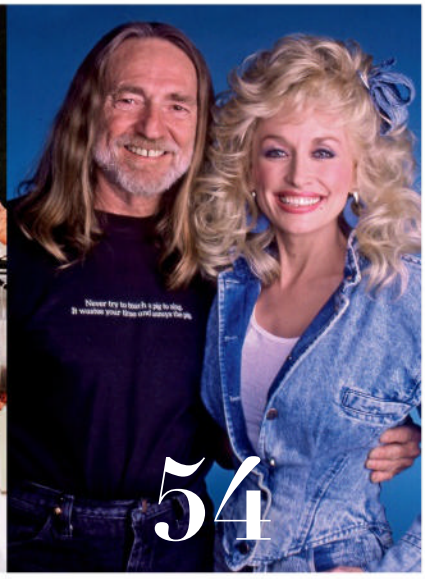

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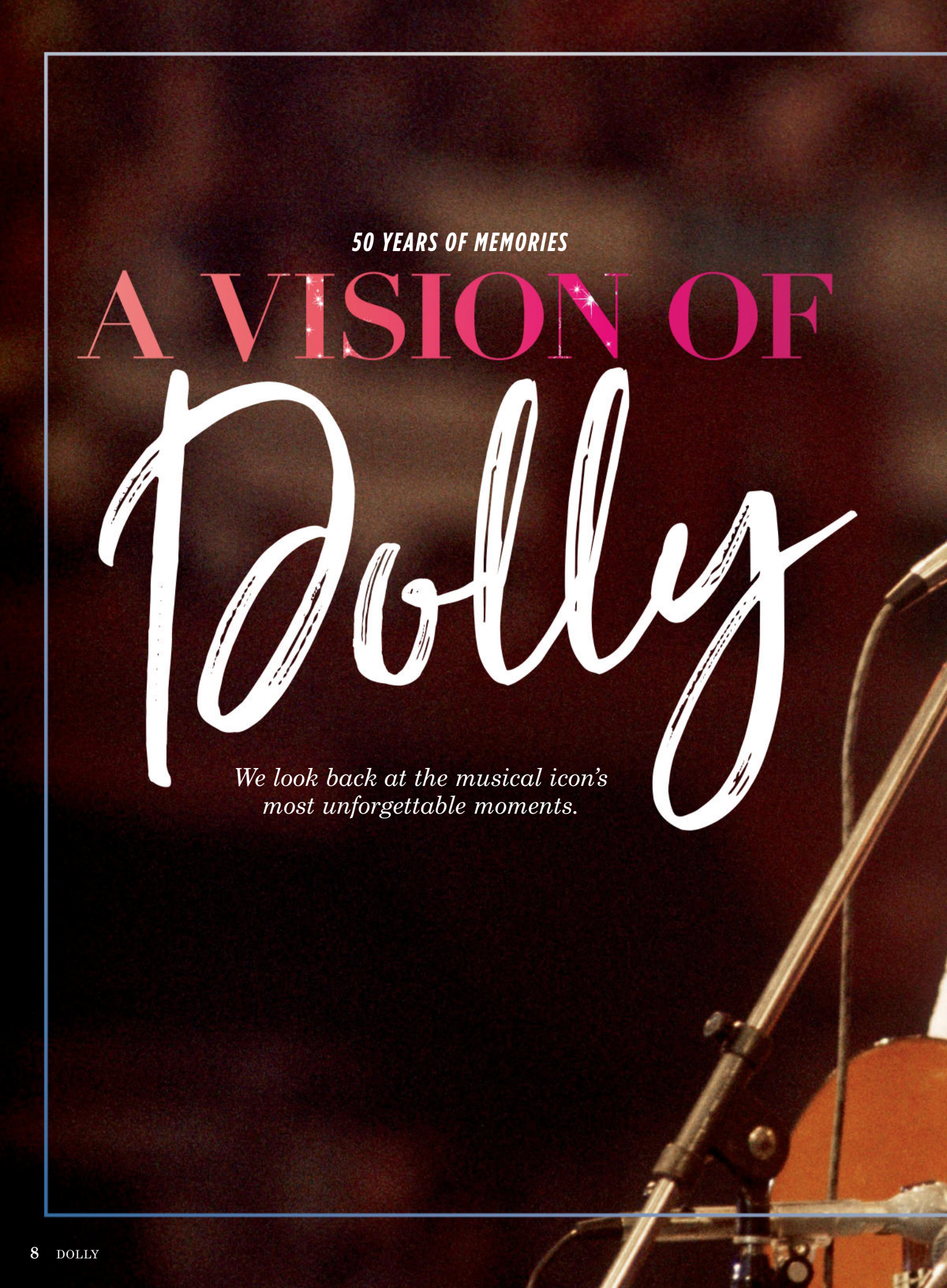
BLESS YOU, DOLLY!

Everyone loves Dolly Parton. We can't help but be head over 5-inch-heels for her sweet soprano voice, those vulnerable "sad-ass songs," as she calls them and the girlish giggle that follows her witty Dollyisms. Her 13 Grammys, Kennedy Center Honor and numerous Hall of Fame inductions only confirm what we've always known: Dolly is a musical icon, a national treasure and a down-to-earth shining star.

At almost 75 years young, she's never been more relevant. The singer recently released her first holiday album, A Holly Dolly Christmas, *in 30 years, and her movie musical,* Dolly Parton's Christmas on the Square, *premieres Nov. 22 on Netflix and features 14 original songs. Plus, her seventh book,* Dolly Parton, Songteller: My Life in Lyrics *(available Nov. 17), delves into the inspiration behind her music. And at a time when we need it most, Dolly has become a voice of tolerance. Who would've thunk that a self-described "hillbilly" would so proudly support LGBTQ rights* and *ban the word "Dixie" from her brand, as she did in 2018? As she told* Billboard, *"As soon as you realize something is a problem, you should fix it. Don't be a dumbass."*

Earlier this year, as Confederate monuments were being toppled around the South, folks started calling for statues of a true Tennessee hero, Miss Dolly Parton, be put in their place. We can't think of a better human being to be so honored.



50 YEARS OF MEMORIES

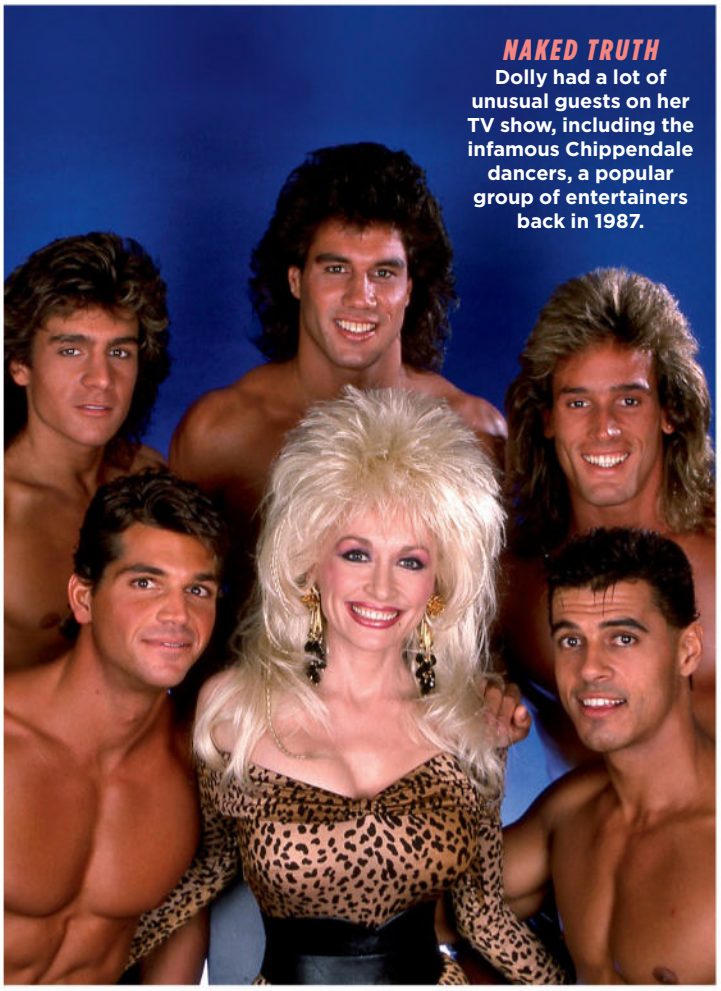
A VISION OF Dolly

We look back at the musical icon's most unforgettable moments.

ACROSS THE POND
The singer performs in London at Wembly Empire Pool, in April 1976, just after the release of her 16th solo album, *Dolly*.

STRIKE A POSE
An outtake from the cover shoot for Dolly's 19th solo album, *Here You Come Again*, released in October 1977. It went on to reach the No. 1 spot on the Country charts.

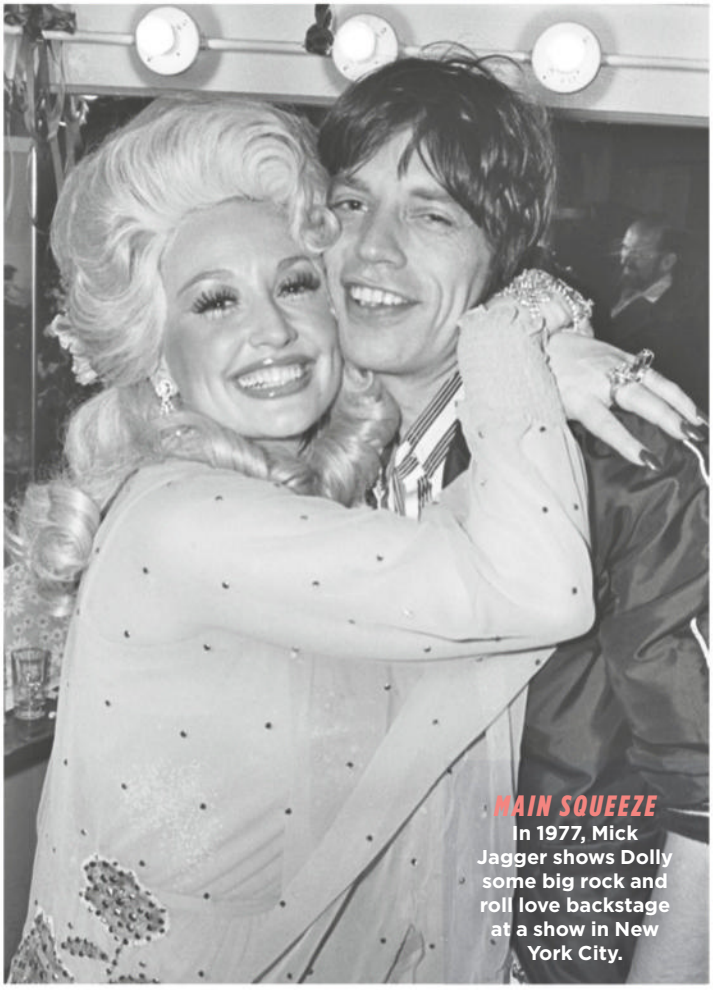
SINGALONG
Rocker extraordinaire Little Richard, who died in May 2020, appears on the country queen's TV show, *Dolly*, in 1987.



NAKED TRUTH
Dolly had a lot of unusual guests on her TV show, including the infamous Chippendale dancers, a popular group of entertainers back in 1987.

THE HORSE'S MOUTH
In 1978, at the height of its popularity, the hottest club in New York City, Studio 54, hosts Dolly's After Party for her friends and fans.

TALK TV
Dolly appears on Jimmy Fallon's *The Tonight Show* in November 2019 where they did a duet of her hit song "9 to 5."



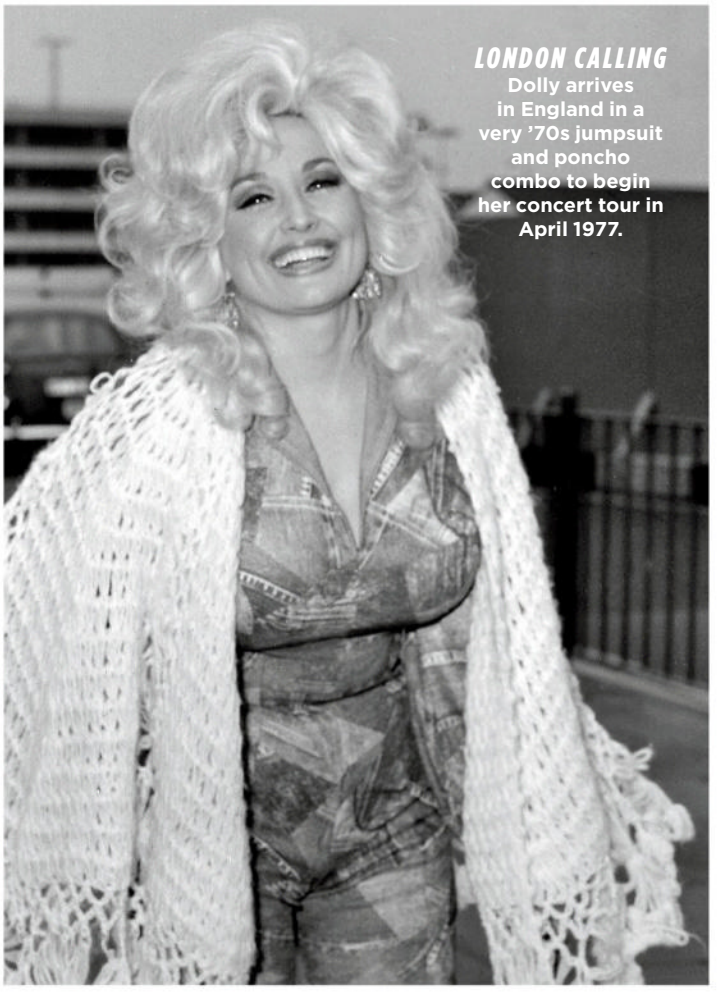
MAIN SQUEEZE
In 1977, Mick Jagger shows Dolly some big rock and roll love backstage at a show in New York City.

HELLO, DOLLY
In 1987, the singer debuts her variety show, *Dolly*, featuring a wide range of guest stars like Tom Petty, Oprah Winfrey, Bruce Willis and Tammy Wynette.

SAY CHEESE
A 1987 promotional photo for the *Dolly* TV show: Its premiere episode attracts almost 40 million viewers, the largest audience *ever* for a television series premiere. Unfortunately, it lasted only one season.

TIMELESS BEAUTY
In 1978 (the same year she poses for *Playboy* magazine), Dolly does a publicity photo session in Los Angeles, showing off her many assets.

WINNER'S CIRCLE
In 2019, at the 53rd Annual CMA Awards, host Carrie Underwood (center) poses with her guest hosts, Dolly and Reba McEntire (right).



LONDON CALLING
Dolly arrives in England in a very '70s jumpsuit and poncho combo to begin her concert tour in April 1977.

HONKY TONK ANGELS
Country legends Loretta Lynn (left) and Tammy Wynette (right) perform at the 1993 CMA Awards with their dear friend Dolly.

SING OUT, SISTER

"The music is my first love. What brought me out of the Smoky Mountains was the fact that I loved to write songs and wanted to sing. I will always write and I will always sing."
—Dolly, to *No Depression* magazine

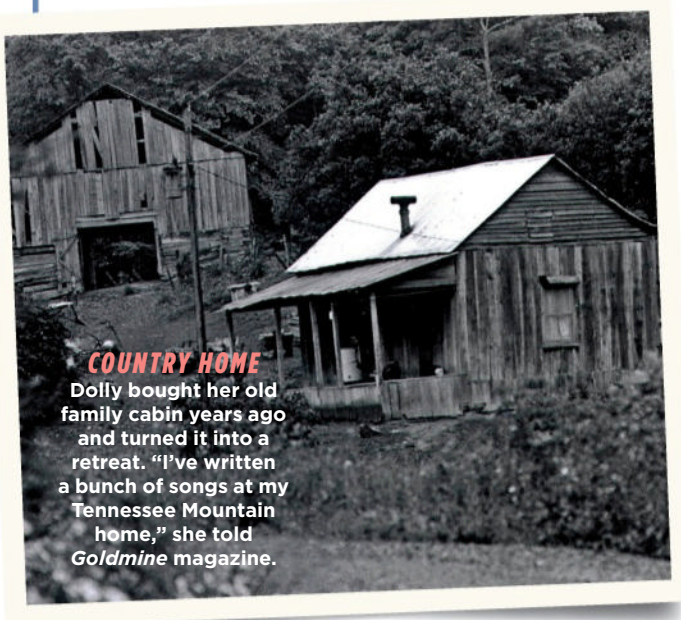
COUNTRY GIRL

BORN DIRT POOR IN THE FOOTHILLS OF THE SMOKY MOUNTAINS, DOLLY HAS BEEN WRITING SONGS ABOUT HER ROOTS, HER PEOPLE AND HER FAITH SINCE SHE WAS KNEE-HIGH TO A TENNESSEE GRASSHOPPER.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

HER TENNESSEE MOUNTAIN Home

Born into poverty in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Dolly has country roots that run deep. BY CLAIRE CONNORS



COUNTRY HOME
Dolly bought her old family cabin years ago and turned it into a retreat. "I've written a bunch of songs at my Tennessee Mountain home," she told *Goldmine* magazine.

ANYONE WHO KNOWS DOLLY'S MUSIC KNOWS much of her life story. So many of the songwriter's lyrics are filled with memories about her large, loving family, their one-room shack and, of course, her cherished state of Tennessee. "These mountains and my childhood home have a special place in my heart," reads the plaque outside the replica of her family cabin in the Dollywood theme park. "They inspire my music and my life."

Born near the Little Pigeon River in Pittman Center on Jan. 19, 1946, Dolly Rebecca Parton was the fourth of 12 children in a family she describes as "dirt poor." Her daddy, Robert—called Lee—was a farmer who was so broke he paid the doctor who delivered Dolly with a sack of cornmeal. For many years, whatever Lee and his hardworking kids grew on their land was his only income—and the only food on their tables. "Up until I was 11 or 12, we just farmed, that's all we did," Dolly said in an interview in *Music City News*. "I

SINGIN' UP A STORM

"My mama says I was squallin' when I was born," Dolly told journalist Martha Hume. "And I'm still squallin'!"

FAMILY TIME
Dolly and her parents, Robert Lee Parton and Avie Lee Owens, on their cabin porch. "If your home is always in your heart and in your head," she said in *Goldmine* magazine, "you'll succeed."

> ***"I was the most popular girl in school, but in the wrong way. I wore tight clothes and told dirty jokes."***
> *DOLLY, TO* PLAYBOY *MAGAZINE*

used to work in the field, hoe corn and set tobacco. With 12 kids you don't have much. In fact, we didn't have anything… except a real hard time."

It wasn't all woe for Dolly though, because as impoverished as they were, the Parton family was rich with love, faith and music. Lots of music. She says she fell in love with songs at her mama's knee. Avie Lee Owens was an accomplished autoharp, dulcimer and guitar player and sang a capella with what Dolly has called "a great mountain voice." Avie also came from a very religious family. Her father, the Reverend Mr. Owens, was a fervent pastor in the Church of God, a Pentecostal religion that hailed the Holy Spirit. In a song Dolly later wrote about her grandfather, "Daddy Was an Old Time Preacher Man," she sings, "He preached hell so hot that you could feel the heat."

Dolly certainly embraced that fire and brimstone, but it was the church music that really got the young girl's attention. "I always loved to sing in church," she told *Music City News*. "When you get to singing those old gospel songs and get that good spiritual feeling—well, there's just nothing else like it." Soon she was performing on the front porch for her many siblings—a captive audience—setting up a "microphone" made of a stick with a tin can on top and belting out tunes, imagining she was performing on the stage of Nashville's Grand Ole Opry. It was just a girlish fantasy at the time, but that dream did soon come true because of her Uncle Bill Owens.

Owens, a musician and songwriter, recognized the aspiring artist's talent when he first heard her sing while washing dishes. He gave her her first guitar when she was 8, and by the time she was 10, he took her to Knoxville and got her on the popular radio program-turned TV show, *The Cas Walker Farm and Home Hour*. By 13, Uncle Bill arranged for her to record her first single, "Puppy Love," and that song earned her a coveted spot on the Grand Ole Opry stage in 1959 where she got three encores. Five years later, Dolly moved to Nashville and went on to conquer the world. But that Appalachian girl has never forgotten her country roots. And neither have we, thanks to three of

her most popular memory songs describing the good, the bad and the lovely side of growing up Dolly.

"My Tennessee Mountain Home" reflects an idyllic Southern existence most can only dream of:

"Sittin' on the front porch on a summer afternoon
In a straight back chair on two legs, leans against the wall
Watch the kids a' playin' with June bugs on a string
And chase the glowin' fireflies when evenin' shadows fall"

"In the Good Old Days (When Times Were Bad)" depicts the harsh realities of being poor, farming the land and not ever knowing where their next meal would come from.

"We'd get up before sun-up to get the work done
We'd work in the fields till the sun had gone down
We've stood and we've cried as we helplessly watched
A hailstorm a' beatin' our crops to the ground
We've gone to bed hungry many nights in the past"

And perhaps her most celebrated memory song, "Coat of Many Colors," which describes overcoming the shame of poverty through the eyes of an innocent girl.

"My coat of many colors
That my momma made for me
Made only from rags
But I wore it so proudly
Although we had no money
I was rich as I could be
In my coat of many colors
My momma made for me"

PARTON KINFOLK

Of her gifted family, Dolly told *Playboy*, "I was the first that ever became popular making music, but a lot of 'em are a lot more talented than me. I just had the grit and dreams."

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Dolly isn't the only Parton who carries a tune.

The beloved star and her 11 siblings grew up surrounded by music. Rachel Dennison, the youngest of the Parton clan, told *People* that "singing was like breathing at home." After Dolly moved to Nashville, Avie Lee and three of Dolly's sisters, Stella, Willadeene and Cassie, followed and recorded a gospel album called "In the Garden." It didn't produce any hits, but it did help start the singing careers of the girls. In fact, seven of the Parton clan went on to be in the entertainment industry as well.

Brother Floyd Parton was a musician and longtime writing partner with Dolly, including the song "Waltz Me to Heaven" from the *Rhinestone* soundtrack. Sadly, he passed away in 2018 at age 60.

Stella Parton, 71, has been a country singer for more than 40 years. She also acts, having appeared in Broadway touring companies of shows like *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, has a podcast called *Parton Me Nashville*, and is a dedicated advocate for victims of domestic violence. Her 40th studio album "Survivor" was released in February 2020.

Randy, 66, is the eighth Parton child and is a musician and actor. He's played bass for his superstar sister over the years and sang on the soundtrack of *Rhinestone*.

Twins Rachel Dennison and Frieda Parton, 63, were the last born to Lee and Avie. Rachel pursued acting, landing the role of Doralee in TV's *9 to 5* in 1982, filling her famous sister's shoes from the 1980 film. Rachel retired from acting when the show ended in 1988. Frieda was a punk rock singer but is now an ordained minister with her own wedding chapel near Dollywood.

Cassie Parton, 69, is a country singer who sometimes takes the stage at Dollywood. And Willadeene Parton, 80, the oldest, is a writer. She penned *Smoky Mountain Memories: Stories from the Hearts of the Parton Family*, a memoir about her famous family.

As for the other siblings, brother Larry passed away soon after birth, and David, 78, Coy, 77, and Robert Lee, 72, avoid the spotlight and lead relatively private lives.

NATURAL BEAUTY
"I look like my mama and my daddy," Dolly explained to *Playboy*. "Daddy's people are fair, blond with blue eyes. And I've got mama's smile and dimples."

FINDING HER VOICE

NASHVILLE or Bust

If there's a "Hollywood of the South," it's Music City in Tennessee. If Dolly could make it there, she could make it anywhere! BY ZAK WOJNAR

DOLLY TOOK A BIG RISK MOVING TO NASHVILLE, but the talented Tennessee mountain girl wasn't going to let fear of failure stop her from chasing her dreams. The day after she graduated high school in 1964, she packed up her things and headed to "Music City, USA." It was here she would achieve her dreams and meet the man she would marry, Carl Dean. The ambitious but humble Dolly quickly found herself signed with Combine Publishing, where she began writing for singers like Skeeter Davis, Hank Williams, Jr., and other country superstars. "I'm certainly not your greatest writer," she told *Rolling Stone* in 1980, "although I feel one of my strongest talents is songwriting." Her career had begun, but Dolly was hungry for more. She'd already established herself as a songwriter, working with her Uncle Bill Owens, but had yet to truly prove herself as the popular singer she was destined to become.

In the days before GarageBand and SoundCloud, aspiring singers needed to get signed to a label, and Dolly proved herself to record producer Bob Beckham, who was thoroughly impressed by her mighty vibrato—to say nothing of her headstrong bravado—and signed her to his label, Monument Records. However, despite Dolly's desire to record country music and her experience with the genre, Beckham balked at selling her as a "country girl." Instead, he wanted Dolly to define herself as more of a mainstream pop singer. Unfortunately, this approach failed to gain traction and none of Parton's early singles became notable hits. Even her cover of "Happy, Happy Birthday Baby," her most successful tune, was unable to sneak into the Billboard Top 100 in 1965.

Finally, after her composition "Put It Off Until Tomorrow" became a Top 10 country hit for Bill Phillips, Beckham decided to take a chance and let Dolly do what she wanted. After all, her backing vocals did find their way onto Phillips' recording, so maybe she could carry a country tune all on her own. Now that she was given a shot, she made sure not to squander the opportunity. Dolly's 1967 solo album, her formal introduction to the world, was given the apt title *Hello, I'm Dolly*, and went on to peak at No. 11 on the Billboard Country Chart. Most of the songs on the record were written or co-written by Dolly herself, though the lead single, "Dumb Blonde," was actually composed by Curly Putman, who famously wrote the megahit, "Green, Green Grass of Home," for "Mr. Grand Ole Opry", Porter Wagoner in 1964.

BLONDE AMBITION

"I started writing songs when I was 8 years old," Dolly told *Music City News*. "I've always had the urge to be in the music business but I knew I wanted to be a star."

> ***"I kept telling folks, 'I'm going to keep making my records, even if I have to sell them out of the back of my car.'"***
>
> *DOLLY, TO* LADIES' HOME JOURNAL

The success of *Hello, I'm Dolly* put the budding Parton on the music map, and the surprise hit "Dumb Blonde" caught the attention of Wagoner, host of his own nationally syndicated television series. As luck or fate would have it, Wagoner's co-host, the "Pretty Miss Norma Jean," had just gone solo, leaving Wagoner without a charming female sidekick and duet partner. Impressed with Dolly's music and effortless charisma (not to mention her country-fried pageant queen looks), Wagoner offered Dolly the coveted role in his TV and road show and she accepted. Between 1967 and 1974, Dolly and Wagoner would be one of the most iconic pairings in country music history, releasing 13 albums together (including 1980's *Porter & Dolly*, which is comprised entirely of outtakes from earlier records). Their song, "Please Don't Stop Loving Me," would hit No. 1 on the US Country Singles Chart, but the aggressive schedule of Wagoner's show had a stifling impact on Dolly's own creative ambitions. In a 2003 *Rolling Stone* interview, Dolly lamented, "I had my own talent. I didn't come here just to be the girl singer on Porter Wagoner's show." While country

stardom was an important stop on her journey, it was never going to be Dolly's final destination.

By 1974, Dolly was ready to move on and fully commit to her solo career. During her time with Wagoner, she had several major hits, including "Joshua," "Coat of Many Colors," and "Jolene," among others, and she felt the time was right for her to make a clean break from Wagoner's show and fully embrace her own future as a genuine pop superstar, not just a country staple. As the legend goes, Wagoner wasn't thrilled at the idea of continuing without Dolly, and she knew leaving would break his heart, so she composed a song to help soften the blow and express her gratitude for everything he had done for her over the years. As she explained to NPR's Terry Gross in 2001, convincing Wagoner to let her leave was a difficult task. "He was dead against it," she told the *Fresh Air* host. "We fought a lot... I could not make him understand. I thought, 'Well, why don't you just write a song about him?'" The song was called, "I Will Always Love You."

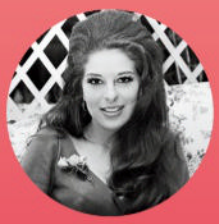
The lyrics perfectly conveyed Dolly's thoughts on working with Wagoner. It was a magical time and she wouldn't trade it for anything in the world, but the moment had come to move on to the next adventure, and she hoped he would understand. According to Dolly herself, the message was successful and Wagoner cried upon hearing her play the song for him. He understood and agreed to let her fly free and tackle the world on

THE OTHER QUEENS OF COUNTRY

Dolly wasn't the only woman breaking the Nashville music scene's glass ceiling.

LORETTA LYNN

Loretta Lynn, 88, was born near the coal mines of Kentucky and raised surrounded by music. Unlike Dolly, Loretta had four kids by the time she was 18 (she'd go on to have four more!) but she was equally as talented writing about her country roots. She sang her hit single "I'm a Honky Tonk Girl," at the Grand Ole Opry in 1960 and was a bona fide star by 1962, appearing on the show 17 consecutive times. Her song, "Coal Miner's Daughter" was so iconic, it went on to be the title of the 1980 movie about her life, earning Sissy Spacek an Oscar for Best Actress.



BOBBIE GENTRY

Singer-songwriter Bobbie Gentry, 78, has always been surrounded by mystery. First there was the Mississippi native's 1967 megahit "Ode to Billie Joe." The unsettling tale of loss, ending in the suicide of its young protagonist, ignited the curiosity of Bobbie's teenaged fans, demanding to know why he jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge. Bobbie's vague answers only added to mystery. That song won the 25-year-old three Grammys, but just 15 years later, Bobbie left show business and never showed her face in public again.

TAMMY WYNETTE

Known as "the girl with the teardrop in her voice," Tammy Wynette was probably the most troubled of Dolly's contemporaries. Born and raised by her grandparents in Mississippi, the beauty school graduate moved to Nashville looking for a record deal, where, like Dolly, she appeared on *The Porter Wagoner Show*. Though she penned "Stand By Your Man," she was married five times and made claims of abuse by her third husband, country star George Jones. She battled an opioid addiction, eventually dying from cardiac arrhythmia in 1998 at age 55.

LYNN ANDERSON

Lynn Anderson, dubbed "the kid from California," was the only contemporary of Dolly's who didn't hail from the South. Born in North Dakota, her family moved to the Golden State when she was young, and by the time she was 20, she was a regular on *The Lawrence Welk Show*. Her 1970 megahit, "Rose Garden," was written from a male perspective, but her feminist twist pushed the song to crossover success on the pop charts, earning her a Grammy. Lynn eventually overcame alcoholism, but died in 2015 at 67 of a heart attack.

> **"Porter Wagoner and I had one of those love-hate relationships. He was very powerful and he used that."**
>
> *DOLLY, TO* LADIES' HOME JOURNAL

GIRL POWER

"Being a woman always served me well," said Dolly to *Ladies' Home Journal*. "Somebody once said, 'Well, you know, it's always going to be a man's world.' I said, 'Well, you know what? I don't mind that it's a man's world, as long as they don't mind if women run it!'"

SITTING PRETTY

Dolly poses with Porter and the cast of *The Porter Wagoner Show* in the late '60s.

her own terms, on one condition: that he get to produce the song. Dolly agreed, and "I Will Always Love You" became a No. 1 hit twice; first in 1974, and then again in 1982, for a rerecorded version made for her film *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, co-starring Burt Reynolds. A third version, done as a duet with Vince Gill, became a Top 20 hit in 1995, and the Whitney Houston cover of the song, recorded for the soundtrack to *The Bodyguard*, needs no introduction.

By all accounts, the parting of ways between Dolly and Wagoner was an amicable affair. Even after she left, he produced her 1976 album, *All I Can Do*. Thus, it came as a surprise to Dolly when, in 1979, he sued her for $3 million, claiming she owed him substantial royalties. Eventually, the lawsuit was settled out of court, though it caused an unfortunate rift in their friendship. To this day, many country music fans remember Dolly's onetime mentor as much for his unexpected betrayal as for his more positive contributions to her legacy.

Nevertheless, old wounds fade with time, and Dolly and her mentor would eventually reconcile. "We had our big separation when I first left and there were a few years that went by," Dolly told *The Tennessean* in 2015. "But I always loved Porter, and he always loved me." Wagoner appeared as a special guest on Dolly's 2005 album, *Those Were the Days*, providing backing vocals on the record's title song. In 2007, at a special show celebrating Wagoner's 50th anniversary with the Grand Ole Opry, they performed "I Will Always Love You" together, with Wagoner reportedly crying on stage during Dolly's heartfelt tribute. Later that year, while the 80-year-old country star lay dying in the hospital with terminal lung cancer, Dolly was at his side once again. She sang her bittersweet song for him one last time on Oct. 28, just hours before he passed away.

A WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE

FROM BACKWOODS BARBIE TO Fashion Icon

Underneath the big wigs, glitzy costumes and mountains of makeup lies country music's most real and original artist. BY LORI BERGER

WHEN THE QUEEN OF COUNTRY music turns 75 on Jan. 19, 2021, she has only one wish to celebrate her three-quarters of a century on the planet and 50 years of stratospheric stardom: To re-create her 1978 breakthrough cover of *Playboy* magazine. And she won't need some custom-made, bejeweled bunny confection for the occasion either. That's because the diminutive, 5-foot-tall, 120-pound powerhouse is convinced she could fit her physics-defying bust-to-waist-ratio body into the same bunny costume she wore for the cover 42 years ago. As she told *60 Minutes Australia*, "The boobs are still the same. I'm kind of cartoonish and cartoons don't really age that much. When I'm 90, I'll probably look about the same—just thicker makeup and bigger hair!"

HAIR RAISING
"I really thought my hair looked good back then, country music at it's finest!"

That authentic yet self-deprecating sense of self and style has been the heart of the music legend's success, relatability and lasting appeal through the years. And thanks to god-daughter Miley Cyrus (who cast her as her Aunt Dolly in Disney's popular *Hannah Montana* series) and multiple collaborations with the likes of Cardi B, Jack White, Queen Latifah, Norah Jones and Lil Nas X, country's most celebrated and sequined songstress has unintentionally transformed herself into a beloved intergenerational celebrity. Today, the Dollyverse includes everyone from grannies, their children and even their great grandkids! It's no wonder that she is the only country artist to have a song on Billboard's Top 20 Country charts for six consecutive *decades*!

As one of 12 kids growing up in a cabin in the Great Smoky Mountains of eastern Tennessee, Dolly showed her talent, resourcefulness and entrepreneurial spirit early on. By the age of 10, she was already crafting the

DRESS TO IMPRESS

"Like Minnie Pearl said, 'Any old barn looks better with a little red paint on it,' and that's sort of how I feel," Dolly said in *Goldmine*. "People say 'Less is more,' but I say, bulls---. More is more and I can't get enough of more!"

A WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE

A LEG UP
"I'm a workhorse dressed up as a show horse," Dolly explained in *Ladies' Home Journal*. "But remember, there's a brain beneath the wigs and a heart beneath these boobs."

"tarty" image that would help launch her to stardom. That translated into using red-tinted Mercurochrome from the family medicine cabinet to redden her lips, burnt matchsticks as liner to highlight her sparkling blue eyes, and using honeysuckle flowers for the sweet scent of perfume. In 2014, she told *Vogue* magazine that one of her crowning glories was when she learned to tease her blond hair (pre-wig days) into skyscraper bouffants. "I thought I had died and gone to heaven," she shared.

Unsurprisingly, her inspiration for her Cinderella-on-steroids sense of style didn't come from the pages of a fashion magazine. Rather, an unlikely source. Explaining it to *The New York Times* recently, she said, "There was this one woman in town, I thought she was beautiful and, you know, she had peroxide hair and had it all piled up on her head, with red fingernails, lipstick, powder and clingy clothes. I thought she was the prettiest thing I had ever seen. Mama said, 'Oh quit looking at her, she ain't nothing but trash.' And I thought, 'Ooh, that's what I want to be when I grow up—trash!'"

And an unlikely style icon was born. "Looking like a trollop fits my personality," she recently told *Southern Living* magazine. "I was not a natural beauty and I always wanted to be pretty. I have such an outgoing personality, that it's fitting that I would be overdone. Trust me when I say: In the mornings I gotta get up and paint on stuff. Those people who wake up and they're just beautiful—they're born that way. Well, that ain't me. I've gotta work for everything I've got."

That has meant defying traditional beauty rules, like *not* washing all that piled on makeup before she goes to sleep every night. In fact, she says, it would take "dire circumstances," for her to be seen without any makeup at all. "Not unless Carl (her husband of almost 55 years) was dead, or maybe if I had to get him to the hospital in the middle of the night, I might make him hang on so I could at least put a little lipstick on," she told the *Independent* in 2002. "But seriously though, when I'm in California, they're so prone to earthquakes, you never know when you're going to have to run out into the streets, so usually I sleep with all my makeup on. Well, at least my eye makeup. I don't go out anywhere without it—I'd rather be dead!"

> ***"I can afford to piddle and do-diddle around with makeup and clothes and stuff because I'm secure with who I am."***
> DOLLY

Defying norms is second nature to the woman who has somehow managed to transcend age, race, nationality, sexuality and politics without ever offending anyone. It's her status as a fashion icon, however, that most surprises her. In 2018, the creative director of Gucci declared Parton his season's muse, and emblazoned her face on the back of denim jackets and the front of pink sweatshirts for his 2019 spring/summer collection.

SHE WILL ALWAYS LOVE CARL

The romance between Dolly and her beloved husband is legendary.

It wasn't exactly love at first sight for Dolly, but it was pretty darn close. In 1964, her very first day in Nashville, the 18-year-old singer-songwriter was wandering the streets of Music City near where she was washing a load of clothes at a laundromat. A white '59 Chevy pulled up near the pretty young blonde and the handsome driver called out to her. She smiled and waved, thinking, this is how everyone acts with complete strangers in Nashville, all friendly-like. When the car came back around again, though, she began to wonder if she was being too friendly. The young man, whom she'd soon learn was named Carl Dean, immediately asked her out on a date. On dollyparton.com, Carl recalls thinking when he first saw her, "I'm going to marry that girl." She wasn't so sure. It took a few more attempts for 20-year-old Dean to woo Dolly into going out on an actual date. "When I finally did," Dolly said in an interview for *The Tennessean*, "the first place he took me was to his parents' house, and that made me feel a lot better about him."

Not that she had to worry. Barely out of his teens, Dean was already a responsible young man. He enlisted in the army soon after they met and the two became close while he served his two years. They set a date to marry after his discharge but Dolly's record label begged her to hold off for a year, thinking a sexy, single Dolly would sell more records than a married one. Dolly batted her long, false eyelashes, assured her manager the wedding could wait, then promptly drove to Georgia and tied the knot with her tall, good-looking groom. "I was so in love I couldn't see straight," Dolly told legendary Nashville DJ Ralph Emery in a radio interview. "I wanted to be married to Carl!"

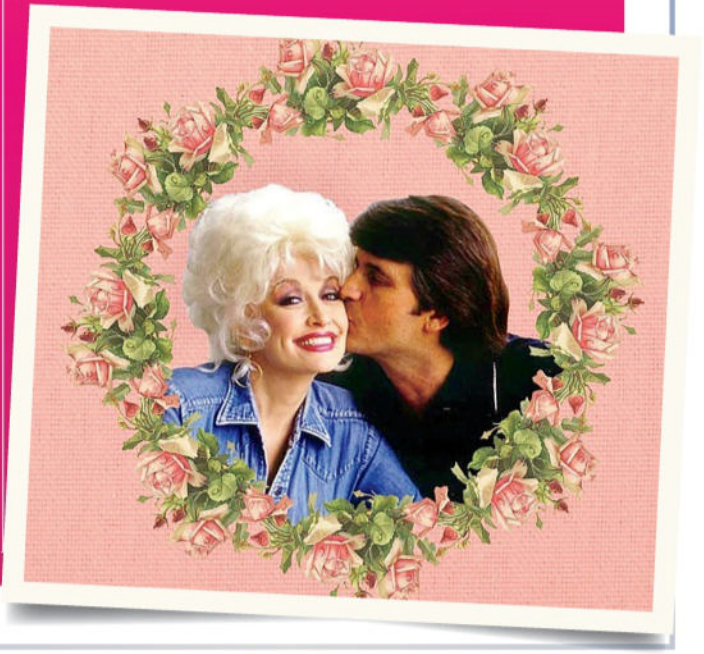
The newlyweds kept their secret for a year, while Carl settled into his job as an asphalt contractor and Dolly kept her label happy by writing and recording song after song, many inspired by her new love. Dean was very content staying out of the spotlight, while Dolly thrived in it. "He understood that I had to do what I had come to Nashville to do," she told *The New York Times*. "He never tried to make me give it up."

Over the decades, their relationship has been a curiosity to fans, mostly because Dean has been a no-show for almost all of Dolly's public appearances while she's been happily duetting with some of the biggest—and sexiest—names in showbiz. Dolly admitted to *The Mirror* that "she never met a man she didn't like," and that she and Dean have an "open" marriage. "He's not jealous of me and I'm not jealous of him," she said. "He knows I flirt. He flirts, too. Yes, it's an open relationship, but not sexually and I would kill him if I thought he was doing that. He would shoot me, too. At the end of the day we love each other madly."

Still, gossip about her other close friendships followed the singer but it turns out there's another simple—and slightly embarrassing—reason that Dean avoids Dolly's concerts: He's not that big a fan of her music. "He likes hard rock, like Led Zeppelin, or bluegrass, so my music is somewhere in between," Dolly told *Good Morning Britain.* "He doesn't dislike my music, but he doesn't go out of his way to play my records, let's put it that way."

That hasn't stopped Dolly from writing tunes about their relationship. Dean has inspired many love songs including "From Here to the Moon and Back," from the *Joyful Noise* soundtrack and "Forever Love," which she sang to her hubbie when they renewed their vows on their 50th anniversary in 2016.

As for their often long-distance relationship, Dolly thinks time apart is healthy for their marriage. "He loves showbiz, as long as he can watch it from his chair and from a distance," she explained in *Playboy*. "He's a homebody and I love to travel but when I go home, that is private. And so, it's true that you can have it all, if you just work it right."



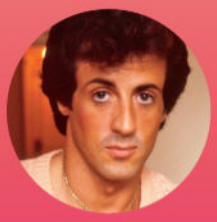
KEEP ON SMILING
"People think I'm always so happy," Dolly said in *Ladies' Home Journal*. "I'm not. But I always try to *be* happy. I have so much to be grateful for."

When asked by *Elle* magazine last year, if she ever could have imagined having her personal style influencing New York and international fashion runways, she just laughed. "God, no! To me that's still one of the funniest things. I always thought people thought I was just gaudy—I am! I'm flashy and flamboyant. Had I not been a girl, I definitely would have been a drag queen! I love all that sparkle, shine and color." She admits to never following fashion trends, "because I don't know enough about it, nor would I be willing to pay the kind of money it takes to truly be fashionable."

It's that mysterious combination of the girl-next-door and backwoods Barbie doll that makes Dolly a real but unlikely style icon. "This is who I am," she told *Elle*. "I not only didn't tone it down, I figured if my work was good enough, people would recognize that. It was about me knowing who I was, being happy with me and feeling comfortable in the way I presented myself. If I was happy, I could make other people happy. That's the way I've always looked at it, that I was totally artificial, but I am totally real,

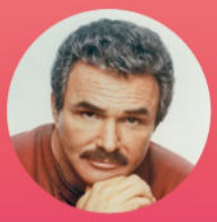
THE OTHER "LOVES" OF HER LIFE

If you believe the gossip mags, Dolly has been in and out of bed with everyone under the sun!



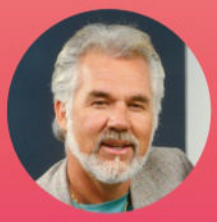
SYLVESTER STALLONE

They were two of the hottest, sexiest stars alive when the movie *Rhinestone* came out in 1984. Sly and Dolly were rumored to be lovers but in fact, it was mutual admiration. "The most fun I ever had on a movie was with Dolly Parton," Stallone told aintitcool.com, and Dolly gushed back that she thought he was "beautiful and a great inspiration to be around," nothing more.



BURT REYNOLDS

The co-stars of *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* had so much chemistry, Dolly once announced to the world, "I couldn't wait to jump into bed with Burt...in the movie, not in real life!" The tabloids enjoyed coupling up the sexy duo so much, her husband used to come home with the weekly magazines, saying "I see you're having Burt Reynolds' baby...again."



KENNY ROGERS

Lifelong friends and collaborators on hits like "Islands in the Stream," Dolly and Rogers were often suspected of having an affair, but it was never to be. While Rogers joked that they had 30 years of sexual tension, Dolly said on the *Today* show, "We were like brother and sister. It would almost be like incest. So, we never went there. Besides, I'm not his type."

JUDY OGLE

One of Dolly's oldest friends and personal assistant, Ogle was often the target of the gossip rags. "Judy went into the military but never married," Dolly told *The Mirror*. "The magazines said that we were in a relationship. It didn't upset me but it embarrassed Judy. I said to her, 'Which would you prefer, being called an old maid or a lesbian?' She says lesbian every time!"

GLAMMED UP
"I know it sounds like a joke because I look like the phoniest person in the world," Dolly told *Goldmine*, "but my look came out of a little country girl's idea of what glamour should look like."

as a writer, as a professional, as a human being. A rhinestone shines as good as a diamond."

Outside of the spotlight, when she takes a much-needed break from the wigs, glamour and glitter, the down-home Dolly comes to life. Weekend camping trips with Carl and kicking back in the vast mansion Carl built for her just outside of Nashville, provides a greatly appreciated respite from her demanding professional life. "My husband and I have a camper and we travel around to little towns on the weekends," she told *Southern Living* magazine. "I'll cook at the house, pack it up like a picnic and take it with us in the camper. My husband loves those little Cornish hens so I fry them up, make potato salad, homemade green beans and cornbread and off we go."

Keeping her hourglass figure intact with a diet of fried and Southern-influenced goodies, not to mention a self-confessed penchant for junk food, presents an ongoing challenge. However, she's learned from endless bouts of dieting that a low-carb diet during the week and a "cheat day" on the weekends (when she will most often make herself a pan of cornbread) keeps her weight steady at 120 pounds. "I do have to watch my weight since I'm so short," she told one fitness magazine, inserting a classic Dolly-ism, "I've tried every diet in the book. I tried eating the book. It tasted better than most of the diets." As for exercise, don't count on running into her at the gym crunching her abs. Formal workouts aren't her thing, but rising every day before dawn and keeping her mind and body actively engaged has proven to be her winning fitness combo. She even counts walking around in six-inch stilettos during weekdays as its own unique workout.

> ***"I'm old enough and cranky enough now, that if someone tried to tell me what to do, I'd tell them where to put it."***
> DOLLY

When asked in a recent ABC television interview on how she'd like to be remembered in 100 years, she responded with her usual humor, "I want 'em to say, 'God, doesn't she look good for her age." But what really sums Dolly up best is the optimistic message behind her favorite childhood book, *The Little Engine That Could*. "Because I am the little engine that *did*," she tells *Southern Living*, "I always say, 'I think I can, I think I can.' And I still think I can."

DOLLY-PALOOZA

"I can't entertain my fans all the time," Dolly said in *The New York Times*. "So I gave them someplace to go, an extension of myself. It feels good to give them something that feels like it's all me."

HER MAGIC QUEENDOM

WELCOME TO Dollywood

This dream theme park celebrates the icon's life, music and love of fun!

BY CLAIRE CONNORS

ALL ABOARD!
"I would give up the park before I would say anybody's not welcome, certainly not because of sexual orientation or color or anything like that," Dolly told *Q-Notes* newspaper.

LOOKING FOR A JOLLY DOLLY TIME, filled with hair-raising rides, tasty Southern vittles, concerts by Appalachian musicians and a museum dedicated to Miss Parton herself? Look no further than Dollywood, located in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

Forty fun-filled attractions await visitors, but most fans come to Dollywood to learn more about the life and career of their favorite country star. The Chasing Rainbows Museum is packed with Dolly memorabilia, from her birth certificate to the costumes from her movies to a wall filled with her awards. You can even use a touch-screen interface to try on Dolly's many wigs! Also on the grounds are reproductions of the cabin she grew up in, the school where she studied and the chapel where she first started singing. It's a total immersion into what it was like for young Dolly to live in the mountains of Tennessee in the 1950s.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Situated on 150 acres of the Great Smoky Mountains, Dollywood is located just a stone's throw away from where the singer was raised.

Next year marks the 35th anniversary of the opening of her theme park. At a celebration in 2011, Dolly explained why she was inspired to launch Dollywood: "I always thought that if I made it big, I wanted to come back to my part of the country and do something great. Something that would bring a lot of jobs to the area." True to her word, the park not only welcomes three million visitors each year, it also employs 3,000 workers, making it the biggest job source in the area, injecting millions of dollars into the local economy. "Growing up poor," she told *The New York Times*, "I know how important it is to make a living. And take pride in it."

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Her home away from home has always been her extravagant tour bus.

One of the highlights of visiting Dollywood is exploring the performer's now-retired lavish tour bus. Her "Gypsy Wagon," as she called it, is decked out with European hand-tooled leather seating, cherry cabinets, three bunk beds for visiting family, two bathrooms with showers and a closet just for her many wigs. There are also homey touches like personal photographs, her favorite tea set, and a large kitchen where the food-loving country singer made her own meals.

And of course, there's a dreamy bedroom. "I live on my bed," she explained to Oprah Winfrey. "It's where I do my praying."

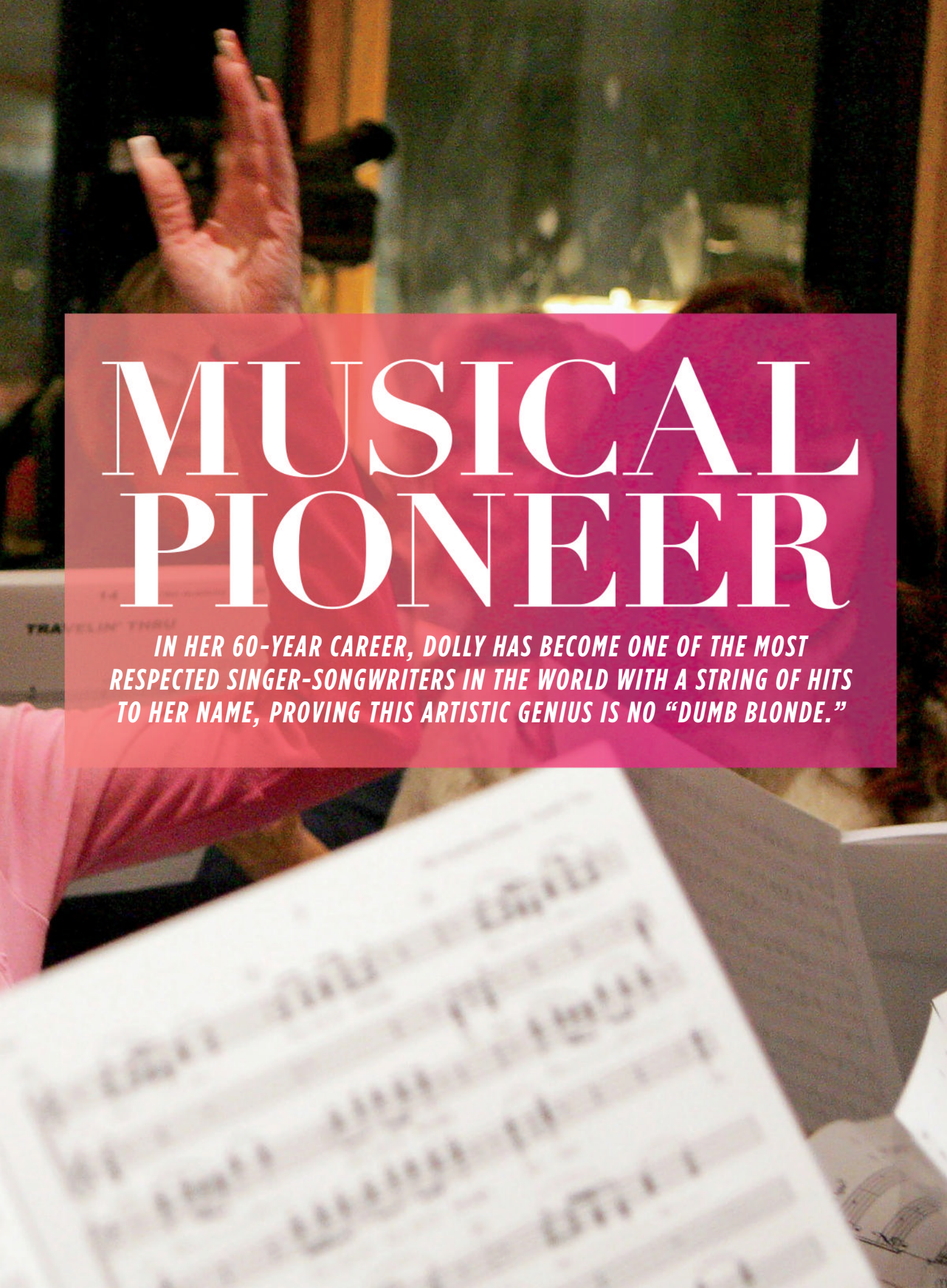
That bus was retired in 2009 with more than 600,000 miles on it and replaced in 2010 with an even more over-the-top home-on-wheels worth $2.7 million! For the platinum blonde road warrior, it's worth every penny. "I sleep better on my bus than anywhere else," Dolly told *The New York Times*. "I'm a gypsy at heart. I just love the rocking of those wheels and the smell of diesel."

Pandemic Update

Despite having to shut down for a few months this year because of COVID-19, Dollywood is again welcoming visitors but some attractions are still closed to the public. Throughout the holiday season, the park will be only open on certain days, so be sure to check out Dollywood.com before your visit.

WORKING GIRL

"I have a great work ethic," the star said in *No Depression* magazine. "I do more between 3 a.m. and 7 a.m. than most people do in a day. There's a whole lot to be said about being willing to do the work."



MUSICAL PIONEER

IN HER 60-YEAR CAREER, DOLLY HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED SINGER-SONGWRITERS IN THE WORLD WITH A STRING OF HITS TO HER NAME, PROVING THIS ARTISTIC GENIUS IS NO "DUMB BLONDE."

BREAKING RECORDS

ALL HAIL THE QUEEN OF Country Music

After composing more than 3,000 treasured tunes, this prolific artist shows no signs of slowing down. BY JIM FARBER

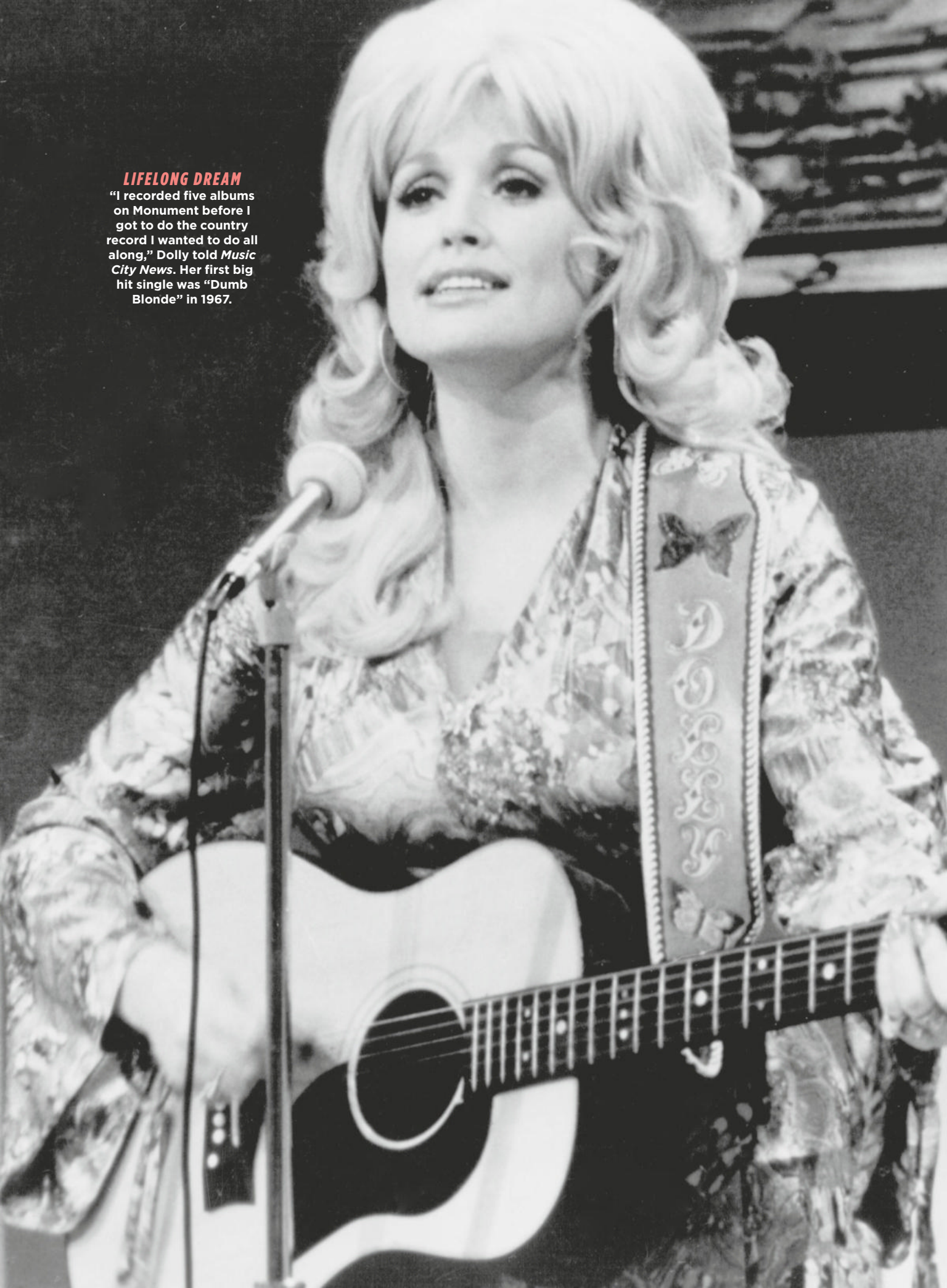
THE SINGER-SONGWRITER composed her first song before she learned to scrawl her first sentence. "My mama wrote it down [for me]," she told *American Songwriter* magazine. "I was 5 years old. The song was called 'Little Tiny Tassel-Top' about a little corncob doll I had. I always had the gift of rhyme. Then I started playing guitar and writing serious when I was about 7. And I've been writing ever since."

That commitment, if not downright obsession, has resulted in over 3,000 compositions credited to Dolly over the past six decades. Scores of her songs have become major hits and nearly as many went on to earn the status of classics. More than 100 of her creations have been covered by other artists, elevating some to the level of standards, including the wise "Coat of Many Colors," which has been covered 31 times so far, and the feisty "9 to 5," with 47 renditions to its credit. That's a minor achievement compared to "Jolene," which has inspired no fewer than 129 artists to cover it, or "I Will Always Love You," at 173 different interpretations and counting. Pandora just declared "I Will Always Love You" the most played cover song ever in its catalogue—naturally, via the Whitney Houston powerhouse version.

THE SWINGING '60S
The title song on Dolly's second album was an early feminist anthem against slut-shaming.

JUST BECAUSE SHE'S A WOMAN

It's not just the sheer volume of Dolly's writing, or its sustained popularity, that has given her work historic weight. It's the fact that she established her command of songwriting at a time when few female artists had the chance to put that talent to work. In the mid-'60s, when her studio career began, major female singers, either in the worlds of country or pop, were rarely allowed to record material they wrote with any consistency. In the world of Nashville, Loretta Lynn was the rare bird who did a lot of important writing earlier, but she didn't dominate the credits the way Dolly did starting right from her debut



LIFELONG DREAM

"I recorded five albums on Monument before I got to do the country record I wanted to do all along," Dolly told *Music City News*. Her first big hit single was "Dumb Blonde" in 1967.

NO JUDGMENT

"I have a real strange voice. It irritates a lot of people to death, 'cause it's so piercing," Dolly told *The Great Speckled Bird* newspaper. "I understand why; it's because my voice sounds a lot like a child's."

work in 1967, *Hello, I'm Dolly*. Her name appeared as either the sole or the co-writer of 10 of its 12 tracks. Bobbie Gentry released a debut that same year that saw her controlling the writing credits, but the "Ode to Billy Joe" singer didn't sustain that level of output for long, retiring from the studio just four years later. By contrast, Dolly has worked as an ace songwriter so tirelessly and for so long that, in the country realm, probably only Willie Nelson owns as many copyrights as she does.

Expanding beyond the world of country, Dolly's groundbreaking role as a tandem vocalist/writer in her early days made her a pioneer in the singer-songwriter movement that overtook the '70s, a role she rarely, if ever, gets credit for. Before the debut albums by giants of the genre like Joni Mitchell, Carole King, James Taylor or Cat Stevens, Dolly presented herself as the whole package, an artist of autonomous creativity.

> ***"I've written a lot of rock songs and some pretty songs that could be easy listening stuff. I just write what I feel."***
>
> *DOLLY, TO* THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD

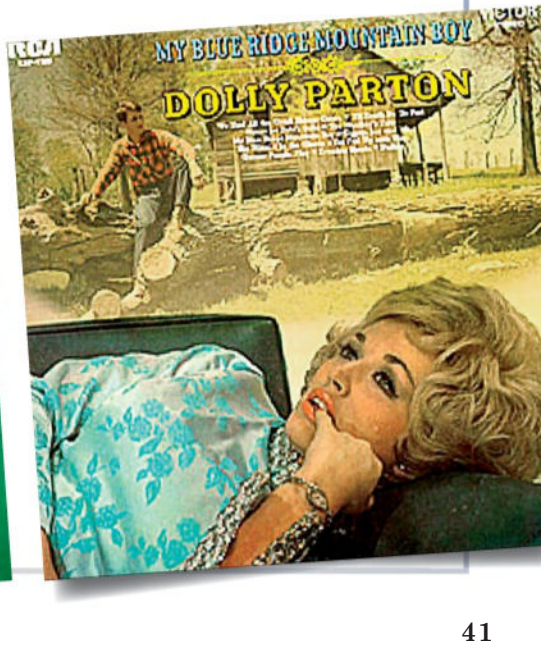
BALLADS FROM DOLLY'S HEART

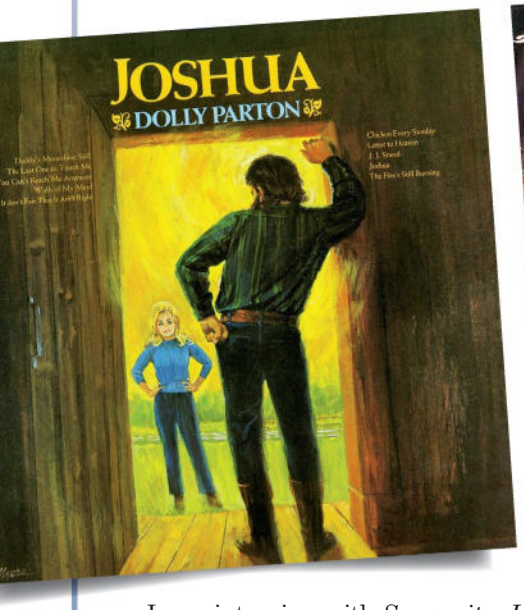
Of course, Dolly's style differed greatly from those writers, giving her even greater distinction. While the others tended to stress personal revelations, Dolly more often favored character-based songs, empathically imagining the lives of everyone from guilt-ridden parents ("The Party") to mistreated children ("Evening Shade"), to a woman who feels the need to give up her baby ("I'm Doing This for Your Own Good"). Along with the time-honored country subjects of cheating spouses and beloved pets, Dolly broke ground with insightful songs about the power of memory ("Little Bird"), the false idealization of nostalgia ("In the Good Old Days When Times Were Bad") and the limits of imagination ("I Can"). She even wrote a song about PMS in a tune titled—what else?—"PMS Blues." Over the decades, Dolly has written with particular power and humor about the sexual double standards between men and women, epitomized by songs like "Just Because I'm a Woman" or "My Hands Are Tied." She has shown equal outrage over the prejudice directed at people with little means, inspiring songs from "Coat of Many Colors" to "Blackie, Kentucky." To drive her story songs home, the star has always been fast with a zinger, as well as with fleet turns of phrase. She's also smart about plotting her songs, sometimes sticking in punchlines or twists in the very last phrase.

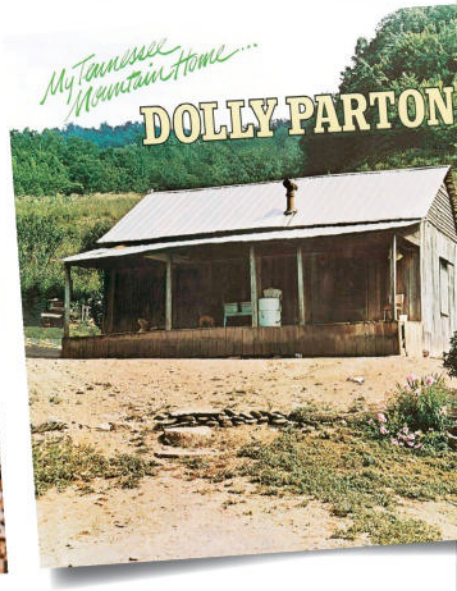
Over the years, Dolly has consistently matched compelling lyrics to music that stirs. It's not just the fluidity of her tunes that beguiles, but her canny placement of hooks in the songs which, together, embed the music deep in a listener's mind. And she isn't bound by genre either. Though she began in the country realm, Dolly has written straight pop songs, rockers, dance tracks, R&B-tinged numbers, gospel hymns, bluegrass romps and more. Last year, she even made a vocal appearance in an EDM song by the hip duo Galantis. "I don't know if my style has a description," she told the Songwriters Hall of Fame newsletter. "Except that it's me."

MAKING HER MARK

To her, writing is "therapy," she told *American Songwriter*. "It's fun. It's creative. I love getting on a big writing binge, staying up a couple of days and knowing at the end that I've created something that was never in the world before."







In an interview with *Songwriter Universe,* Dolly said she writes "anywhere, anytime and for any reason. Sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night and write something down I've dreamed," she said. "If I'm in a bath, I keep a tape recorder or a notepad somewhere so I don't miss a melody."

Different instruments have inspired different kinds of Dolly songs. "If I'm thinking I'm going to write something real country, real mountain-y, I'll either grab my autoharp or I'll get a banjo," she told *Songwriter.* Other tunes, she writes on piano or the dulcimer.

Whatever instrument she writes on, Dolly always takes off her false fingernails before starting. "I want to really be able to play the really good licks," she said. "Then, when I'm done writing, I get a new set of nails and go on about my business."

> ***"I don't write music and I can't read a note of music. I do it all by ear. I just write the words and put a melody to it."***
> *DOLLY, TO* THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD

MOUNTAIN ANGEL

In terms of drawing fans to the masterful music that she writes, Dolly's unique vocals play a huge part. Girlish in pitch and character, her voice has an innocence that somehow never reads as naive or weak but, instead, as completely sincere. As well, there's a power in her lungs, a conviction in her vibrato and a certitude in her delivery that makes every listener take every word she sings seriously. "What soul I have in my voice—the feeling and sincerity that's there—is from (my) church-going days," she told BMI's magazine. "I get a feeling from singing gospel that I never get from singing anything else," she told the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

In fact, Dolly began her singing life in church at age 6 and started playing guitar one year later. By 10, she was singing on local radio shows in Tennessee and, at 13, she recorded her debut single, "Puppy Love," for an obscure Louisiana label. One day after graduating high school in 1964, she high-tailed it to Nashville, seeking stardom as a writer. Working with her musician uncle Bill Owens, she earned a contract with Combine Publishing. Two songs she penned with her uncle soon became Top 10 country hits for others: "Put It Off Until Tomorrow" for Bill Phillips in 1966, and "Fuel to the Flame" for Skeeter Davis the next year. Stars from Kitty Wells to Hank Williams Jr. started to cut her songs, inspiring Monument Records to sign her to a recording contract at 19. Even so, they didn't see her as a country singer at first, pivoting her instead toward pop. "I guess they figured my voice was so weird that the country people would never go for it," she told the Songwriters Hall of Fame, with a laugh.

Of course, Dolly's country character soon came through, and the company allowed her to follow her natural path. That kicked off a recording career that has resulted in a ballooning catalogue of over 60 original studio albums, a clutch of live works and endless hit packages. Here's a look at the many highlights in Dolly's deep trove of songs and albums as they advanced through the decades.

THE '60S

For her debut, *Hello, It's Dolly*, released in the fall of 1967, Dolly may have written nearly every song, but

HER MUSIC MAN

"We fought all the time, especially about my songs," Dolly said of Porter Wagoner in *Goldmine*. "I'd write them, he'd produce them, but I had to try so hard to get my ideas in there."

the record company chose a cover for the single: "Dumb Blonde," penned by Curly Putnam. Luckily, it worked in her favor. The song's sly lyric dovetailed perfectly with her character, offering a sharp rebuke to anyone clueless enough to underestimate her. "Just because I'm blonde/ don't think I'm dumb/'cause this dumb blonde ain't nobody's fool," went its tart chorus. Dolly drove the point home with the confidence of the songs she wrote and performed, including the second single from the set, "Something Fishy," about a guy who claims to be fishing when he's actually up to other things. "I guess some largemouth bass left that lipstick on your shirt," she sang, sarcastically. "I don't think you're a fisherman, honey/I think you're a flirt." The music she wrote for her lyrics was straight country, and while it produced no huge hits, the album itself nearly broke the Country Top 10, giving this newbie a promising start.

Soon after her debut, Dolly recorded her first set with Porter Wagoner, the country star who had recently made her a regular on his hit TV show. Their debut, *Just Between You and Me*, issued at the start of 1968, showed Dolly's flair for writing opposing characters in her songs, making them perfect for the duets. In "Mommy, Ain't That Daddy?," a mother brings her kids to a Goodwill store where the children spy a disheveled man, only to later recognize him as their father. While Dolly narrated the mother, Porter voiced the dad, creating a virtual musical play, an approach that would highlight many tracks on their joint albums to come. Given Porter's greater star power at the time, it's no surprise their tandem album sold better than Dolly's solo debut did, easily entering the Country Top 10.

That didn't stop Dolly, however, from continuing to release albums on her own, starting with her second solo work, *Just Because I'm a Woman*. One of its songs offered a sneak preview of what would later become one of her most famous pieces, "I Will Always Love You," though it expressed nearly the opposite sentiment. The cleverly titled "I'll Oil Wells Love You" told the tale of a gold digger who lures an oil magnet into marriage. The humor of such songs smartly contrasted sadder odes like "The Bridge," in which a pregnant young woman is abandoned by her man and considers ending it all on a local bridge.

BREAKING RECORDS

The most important piece on the entire album, however, was the title track, which centered on a man who, upon discovering his wife's sexual past, tries to use it against her. Not so fast, she declares. "My mistakes are no worse than yours/just because I'm a woman," she says, forging one of Dolly's strongest early feminist statements. It resonated deeply enough to give the singer her first Top 20 Country single.

Despite her growing solo success, Dolly remained passionate about recording with her benefactor. Six months after *Just Because I'm a Woman*, she again paired with Wagoner for *Just the Two of Us*. This time Dolly introduced a gothic tone to her writing, an interest that would evolve into a career motif. "Jeanie's Afraid of the Dark" centered on a child who has an unusual fear of death, an inkling that turns into an omen. Equally grim was "The Party" in which a couple leaves their children at home to attend an event, with tragic results.

As a pure piece of writing, however, the album's peak track was its closer. In "I Can" a woman discovers that even the most joyful experiences in her inner life can't erase the haunting loss of a lover. "In my mind, I can be anything I want to be," she sang. But "my mind can't forget you"—a lyric Dolly delivered in a voice vulnerable enough to crush you. Once again, this tandem set sold better than her lone works. But her next solo venture, *In the Good Old Days (When Times Were Bad)*, made up for that by featuring several tracks that entered into Dolly's canon. The title song challenged one of country's most sacred cows—nostalgia—showcasing its painful limitations, while "Little Bird," contained some of Dolly's most poetic lyrics, using the winged creature as a metaphor for the sweet joy of memory.

The success of *In the Good Old Days* provided the perfect setup for Dolly's fourth solo work, *My Blue Ridge Mountain Boy*, her first to enjoy equal chart success to her albums with Wagoner. Finally, she cracked the Country Top 10 on her own. Her creative way with morbid thoughts didn't hurt. The darkly funny "Evening Shade" chronicles a bunch of school kids, terrorized by a mean headmistress, who seek revenge by torching the place, a move Dolly recounts with relish. A more somber mood informed "Gypsy, Joe and Me," in which a woman narrates her life story as a series of losses, leaving her, in the end, the final survivor in her family. Not to be outdone, the title track chronicled the regrets of a woman who left a loving boy back home to chase the excitement of the city, only to find herself lonely and ashamed. In her high, vulnerable voice, Dolly drove the character's full heartbreak home.

MAGNIFICENT TRIO
On forming their group, Linda Ronstadt recalled: "Emmylou [Harris] (right) called me up and said, 'Dolly Parton's at my house, you have to come over.' I lived 40 minutes away; I got there in 20."

THE '70S

For Dolly, the '70s began decisively. Her first album in the new decade, *The Fairest of Them All*, modernized her style with crisper production, presaging the sound of the singer-songwriters who'd dominate the mainstream one month later starting with James Taylor's *Sweet Baby James*. Her singing, too, had a sharper edge. Moreover, her viewpoint advanced, inspiring some of her boldest feminist statements yet. "When Possession Gets Too

Strong" pulled a gender change on the cliché of the rambling man who can't be tied down. Here, it's a woman who tells a guy she needs to be free, a stance you'd more likely associate with an untamable soul like Joni Mitchell. Likewise, in "Just the Way I Am," a woman lets a guy know he'll have to adjust to her moods, no matter how changeable. For a different kind of daring, "Robert" skirted the subject of incest. But the peak track—both in terms of musical ingenuity and lyrical precision—was "Down From Dover," which featured a rawer sound than anything she'd recorded before, showing a new specificity in her lyrics and offering a highly detailed story of a knocked-up girl in deep denial about the intentions of the father. The pain of her cluelessness is matched by the intensity of the music and the gravity of Dolly's vocal. The story culminates in a shock ending that caused many of her peers at the time to caution her against releasing it. But that very edginess earned the praise of critics and inspired a moving cover decades down the line by the queen of dark revelation, Marianne Faithfull.

> ***"I love having money and what money can do, but money has never been the thing that motivated me. It was always the art."***
>
> *DOLLY, TO* GOLDMINE

Despite achieving this fresh creative high on her own, Dolly recorded her next three releases with Wagoner. It wasn't until *Joshua*, her seventh solo release, and 13th overall, that she scored a solo No. 1 country smash. The title track did the trick, boosted by Dolly's soaring vocal and a compelling storyline centered on a young woman unintimidated by a reclusive man everyone else fears. The tale enhanced Dolly's persona as someone both unmoved by the opinions of others and unafraid to go for what she wants. The success of both the song and album put Dolly on a roll; she continued with another solo work issued that same year, *Coat of Many Colors*, one of an astonishing four albums she put out in 1971. Not only did *Coat* become a Top 5 Country smash, the title track went on to become a staple in Dolly's concerts, later inspiring covers by everyone from Shania Twain to Eva Cassidy. It was hardly the only standout song on the set. In the witty "She Never Met a Man (She Didn't Like)" a wife begs her husband not to be fooled by a woman who flirts with him, since she's the sort who does that to every guy she sees.

Dolly's great run of achievements in 1971 may well have obscured an underheralded album released the next year. *Touch Your Woman* nudged Dolly toward the hipper world of folk-rock, with brighter production, more spare instrumentation and a harder beat. Better, its arrangements allowed her to show her skill at vocal harmonies, revealed in gorgeous songs like "Will He Be Waiting?" Unfortunately, the album didn't produce a hit, leading the singer to record her next three releases with the reliable Wagoner.

Perhaps in reaction, Dolly took an especially personal turn on her 1973 solo release, *My Tennessee Mountain Home*. An ambitious concept album, it chronicled her pre-stardom years in vivid detail. But it was a memorable character portrait on her next album that would provide one of the peak moments in her career. In 1974, she issued the pivotal *Jolene*.

Besides its universally acclaimed title track, the album also featured "I Will Always Love You," sung by Dolly in a style as spare and simple as Whitney Houston's later take was bold and showy. Both "Jolene" and "Always" shot to the top of the country chart, while the former gave the singer her first presence

GUITAR HERO
"I took my music real serious," Dolly told reverb.com. "I was always plucking along on somebody's instrument, whatever they would leave lying around. But I always loved the guitar."

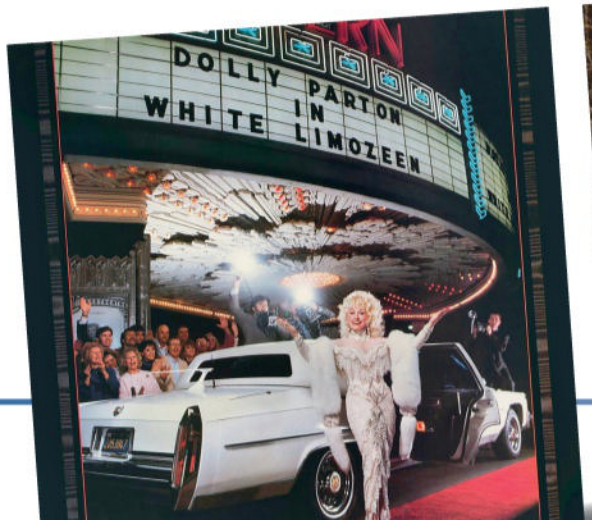
on the Top 100 Pop list ever. She equaled that feat in the country realm again in '74 with the title track from *Love Is Like A Butterfly*. The album featured one of her most airborne vocals, as they float effortlessly over the light melody. Though it's not as well-known, the title song from Dolly's next album, *The Bargain Store*, also topped the country chart. The song shows her smart way with a metaphor. In the lyric, a woman likens herself to used goods at a discount store, all while making sure to stress that modest places like that often hold hidden treasures.

Despite so much success in the country world, Dolly pined for a pop crossover, a goal she finally made headway toward in 1977 with the album *New Harvest…First Gathering*. Her first attempts in that direction were awkward, including strained covers of R&B hits like The Temptations' "My Girl," and Jackie Wilson's touchstone "Your Love (Keeps Lifting Me Higher)." But at least she broke the ice, cracking the Pop 100 Album chart for the first time. Later that year, she found a more effective way to go mainstream. The title track of the *Here You Come Again* album shot straight to No. 3 on Billboard's pop chart, even if she needed outside songwriters to help: the brilliant Brill Building team of Barry Mann and Cynthia Weill. In fact, outside writers dominated the entire album, though Dolly did pen one significant pop treasure on the set: the country-rocker "Two Doors Down," awarding her another pop radio score. Dolly next presented herself as a full-on rocker, with the barreling hit from the '78 *Heartbreaker* album, "Baby I'm Burnin'." Consider this Dolly's answer to Elvis' "Burnin' Love," generating enough excitement to prove she could move beyond country without losing her soul.

THE '80S

After beginning the decade with a slight stumble—the *Dolly Dolly Dolly* album, which didn't feature a single track written by her—Dolly rebounded resoundingly with one of the most prized releases of her career, *9 to 5 and Odd Jobs*. Tied to the smash movie, and the zippy title single, the songs on the set expressed Dolly's undying respect for working men and women everywhere. Not only did the title track give Dolly her first pop No. 1, it crowned the country chart as well.

In 1987, she struck creative gold by hooking up with Linda Ronstadt and Emmylou Harris on the inspired three-way set *Trio*. Not only did the stars harmonize like siblings who had sung together all their lives, their music leaned favorably toward Dolly's rural roots. She sang lead on her song "Wildflowers," on which she also played the autoharp, and the one-two punch resulted in



a Top 10 Country score that helped the album go platinum. Before the '80s ended, she forged another successful duet, this time with country legend Mac Davis, who wrote a song and sang with her on 1989's gold-selling *White Limozeen*.

OLD FRIENDS
Longtime musical collaborator and "brother," Kenny Rogers joined Dolly for a live performance in Los Angeles in 1990.

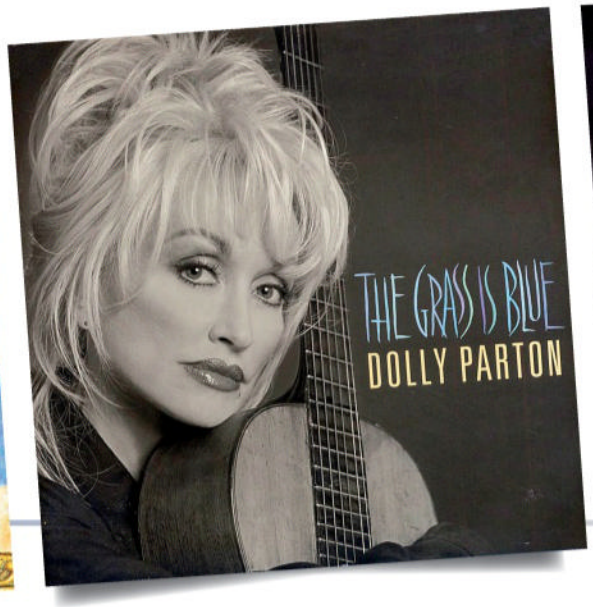
THE '90S

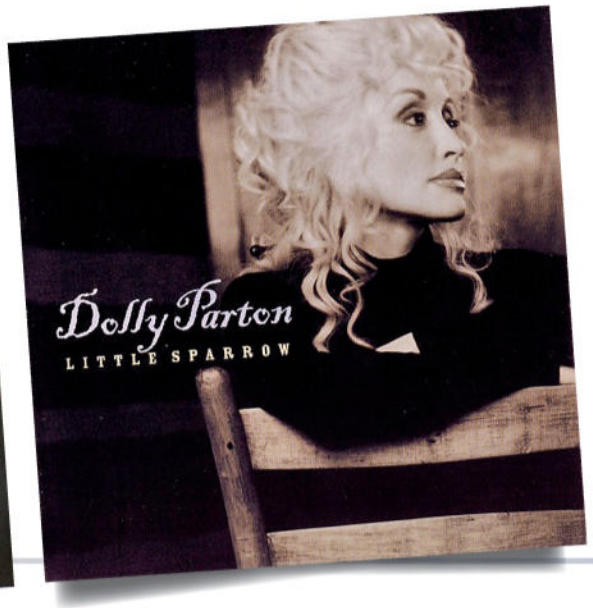
The strategy of pairing Dolly with other singers expanded greatly in the '90s, accounting for her finest achievement of the era. Her 1991 set, *Eagle When She Flies,* featured duets with Ricky Shelton and Laurie Morgan, the latter on the fun face-off "Best Woman Wins," resulting in Dolly's first No. 1 country album in a decade. Two years later, she formed a dream project with the other two most important female country stars from the '60s, Loretta Lynn and Tammy Wynette. Their trifecta work, *Honky Tonk Angels*, emphasized country standards, from "Silver Threads and Golden Needles," to Dolly's early hit "Put It Off Until Tomorrow." By combining their glorious voices, the trio reasserted their defining role in an entire era and movement in country music. Not to be outdone on the collaborative front, Dolly ended the decade with a sequel to her earlier set with Linda and Emmylou, *Trio II*. In fact, the music it contained had been recorded directly after their original album, but disputes between the artists' labels held up the release for a dozen years. Luckily, the recordings still sounded as fresh as ever, highlighted by their ringing, three-way harmonies on Neil Young's "After the Gold Rush."

THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Dolly, inspired by the alterna-country movement that arose in the '90s, plowed a bold new path come the dawn of the fresh century. She began tapping that spirit a few months before the end of 1999 with *The Grass Is Blue*, her first album for the boutique label Sugar Hill. It was a winner. As its title implied, this was her first album mainly devoted to bluegrass influences, a style she was born to play. Somehow, Dolly managed to top that feat in 2001 with *Little Sparrow*, a rootsy work that stands among the greatest achievements of her career. Fired by some of her most impassioned singing, the album featured a spirited range of material, from a country cover of Collective Soul's grunge-pop hit "Shine" to the gorgeous, self-penned title track. "Little Sparrow" was Dolly's haunting variation on the traditional ballad "Wayfaring Stranger," beginning with an a capella vocal that certified the purity of her intent. The set also included a fresh take on "Down From Dover," adding a never-before-heard verse for extra heartache.

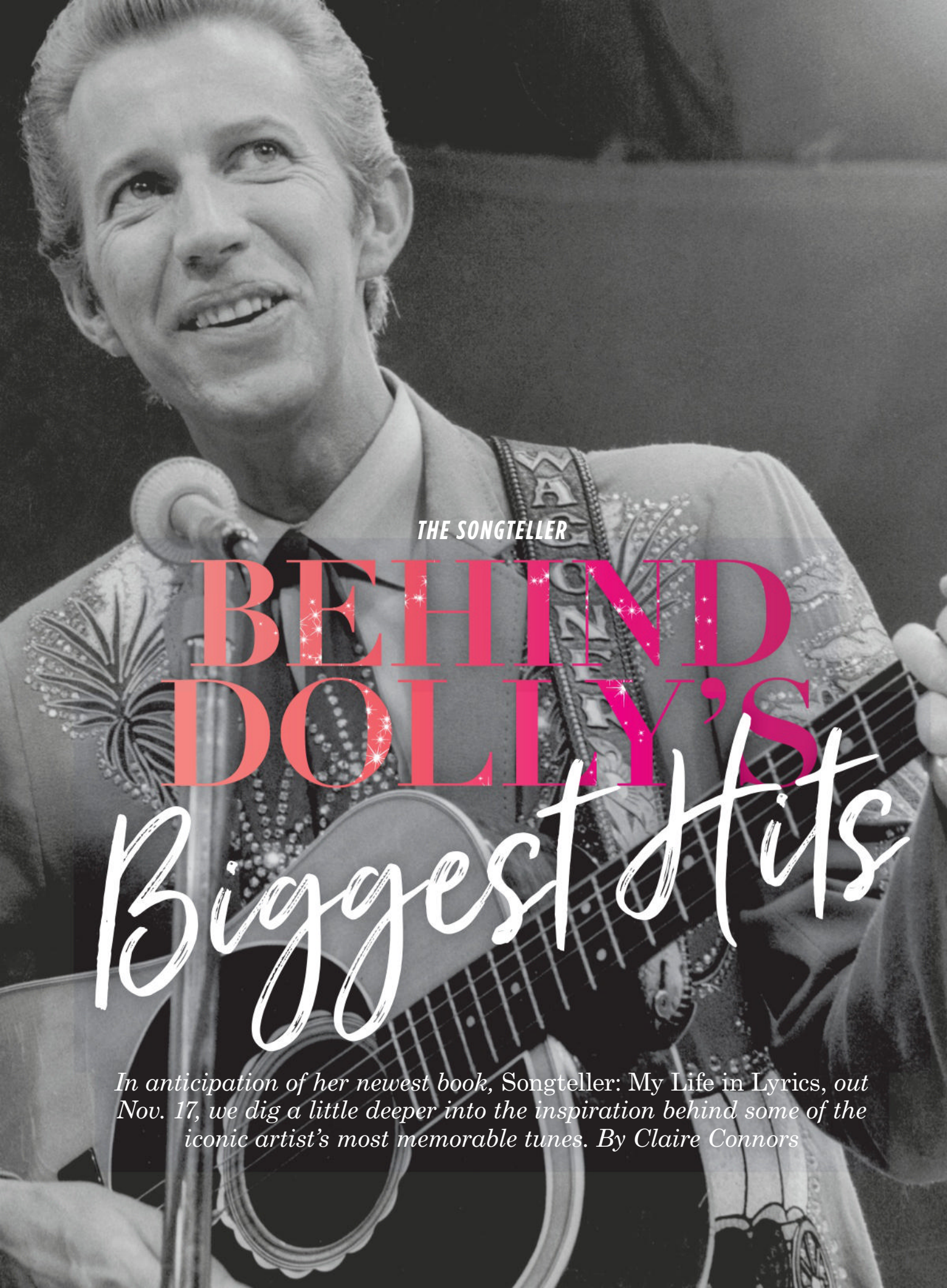
In the years since *Little Sparrow*, Dolly hasn't slowed for a second. She continues to work at the pace of a young artist, in the process demonstrating that, even after more than half a century, she's still eager to sing, play and, most of all, write.





LOVE EVERLASTING

The most important song in Dolly's career, "I Will Always Love You," was written for her longtime musical partner, Porter Wagoner. She sang it to him on the day he died in 2007.



THE SONGTELLER

BEHIND DOLLY'S Biggest Hits

In anticipation of her newest book, Songteller: My Life in Lyrics, *out Nov. 17, we dig a little deeper into the inspiration behind some of the iconic artist's most memorable tunes. By Claire Connors*

LUCKY NUMBER 13

Dolly's 13th solo album not only featured the popular title song but also her single, "I Will Always Love You."

"JUST BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN" (1968)

This was the powerful title track to her 1968 album, and it's a very early peek into the feminist mind behind so many of Dolly's songs. The empowering lyrics are in response to her husband Carl Dean's disappointment to learn that she wasn't a virgin on their wedding night. "He was so upset, he had a hard time getting over it," Dolly revealed to *Mojo* magazine. "That's why I wrote 'my mistakes are no worse than yours, just because I'm a woman.' Carl hates it when I tell that story but I've got to tell the truth, don't I?"

"THE BRIDGE" (1968) AND "DOWN FROM DOVER" (1970)

Dolly's "sad-ass songs," as she affectionately calls them, are among her favorites. Written in the traditional style of a "murder ballad," in which a singer describes a gruesome crime or a murder—think "Banks of the Ohio" and "Tom Dooley"—these two heartbreakers tell the universal tale of young girls left pregnant and alone by a supposed true love. In "Dover" the baby is stillborn and its mother cries, "Our baby has been born, but something's wrong, it's too still, I hear no crying," whereas in "The Bridge," the girl decided to take her own life, singing, "My feet are moving slowly, closer to the edge, here is where it started, and here is where I'll end it…"

"JOSHUA" (1970) AND "APPLEJACK" (1977)

These are actually written about the same reclusive mountain man in young Dolly's life. "My mama didn't much like me to visit him because he had long hair and big bushy eyebrows," recalled the singer on her *Dolly* TV show. "But he was the best friend I ever had as a little girl." So, she wrote two songs about him. In "Applejack" he's an old hermit who entertained folks with his wicked banjo playing, while "Joshua" imagines a romance between the loner and the young singer, which didn't happen in real life.

"COAT OF MANY COLORS" (1971)

The song that inspired a book and two made-for-TV movies is based on Dolly's humble upbringing and is, of course, her personal favorite. "It's a true story from my childhood about a little ragged coat that Mama made for me, and she tried to make me feel proud of it by telling me the story of Joseph from the Bible," she told the Nashville Songwriters Association International. "They actually use it now in schools as an anti-bullying song." Now that's something to be proud of!

"I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU" (1973)

This bittersweet send-off is so linked to Whitney Houston's 1992 version that many didn't even know it was a Dolly original. The lyrics are a farewell "love letter" to her long-time musical partner, Porter Wagoner, with whom she was separating from professionally (turn to page 22 for more on their relationship). Dolly revealed on the Bobby Bones radio show that she wrote both "Jolene" and "I Will Always Love You" on the same day, observing, "That was a very good day!" Indeed, it was.

"JOLENE" (1973)

This heartbreaker has two true stories to its name. After a show, a young fan with red hair and green eyes approached Dolly seeking an autograph. Her melodic name, Jolene, so impressed Dolly that she promised she would write a song about it one day. Around the same time, Dolly caught her husband, Carl, flirting with a sexy bank teller, moving her to pen the painful plea, "Please don't take him just because you can." Years later, in an interview at the Glastonbury Festival in the U.K., she recalled, "Had it not been for that bank teller, I never would've written 'Jolene' and I wouldn't have made all that money, so thank you, Jolene!"

"TO DADDY" (1976)

This song is dimly based on Dolly's long-suffering mom who, for years, put up with a neglectful husband for the sake of the kids. In real life, Lee and Avie Parton stayed together, while Dolly's song has an O'Henry-esque twist

WORKING STIFF

The title song from the movie that launched her acting career, *9 to 5*, was also Dolly's first single to reach No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 charts. It also garnered her two Grammys and an Academy Award nomination.

MAKE SOME NOISE
Dolly starred in the 2012 musical-comedy, *Joyful Noise*, with her good friend and collaborator Kris Kristofferson. They sing together in the romantic duet, "From Here to the Moon and Back."

in its last verse. In her goodbye note, the mama writes:

"'I've gone in search for love I need so badly

I have needed you so long but I just can't keep holding on'

She never meant to come back home

If she did, she never did say so to daddy

Goodbye to daddy."

> **"If you talk bad about country music, it's like saying bad things about my momma. Them's fightin' words."**
> DOLLY

"9 TO 5" (1980)

For a gal who doesn't like the word "feminist," Dolly sure did write a lot of galvanizing songs for the women's movement. This Grammy-winning number was created during the filming of Dolly's first movie, *9 to 5*, about three oppressed office workers (Dolly, Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin) getting the ultimate revenge on their sexist boss (Dabney Coleman). Legend has it, the singer-turned-actress was "playing" her acrylic nails like a washboard on set and the sound reminded her of a typewriter. That clickity-clack opens the song that became the working woman's battle cry.

"THESE OLD BONES" (2002)

Here we learn the true story of an Appalachian clairvoyant Dolly knew who could read the future by throwing a handful of old animal bones. Dolly says she grew up around a few people with the "gift" of prophecy, including her mother and an aunt. In fact, when she was a kid, that mysterious mountain woman predicted Dolly would grow up to be a star. "She said I was anointed, and I was going to do great things," she recalled at a press conference for her Netflix series, *Heartstrings*. "I asked my mama what that word meant and she said, 'That just means God has his hand on you.' And I feel like he did."

"FROM HERE TO THE MOON AND BACK" (2014)

This tender love song appears on the soundtrack for *Joyful Noise* that starred Dolly and Queen Latifah as dueling choir leaders. When it came time to write a song about the everlasting romance between Dolly's character and her husband (played by fellow singer Kris Kristofferson) naturally she turned to her husband, Carl, for inspiration. "I thought, 'Well, I'll write some beautiful song about him," she told The Boot, a country music website. "In order to make it real and really touching, I'll write about my true emotions about someone I have loved for more than half of my life."

HEARTSTRINGS SINGS!

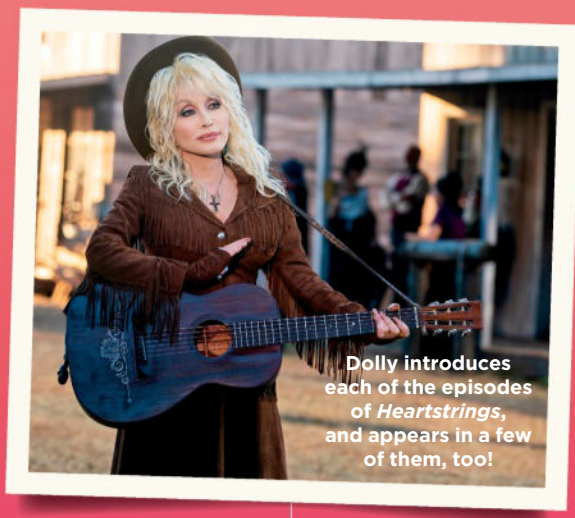
Netflix brings Dolly's most iconic songs to life. From the worthiest to the corniest, we rate the episodes.

❤❤❤❤ **Must-See TV!** ❤❤❤ **Pretty Darn Good** ❤❤ **Take It or Leave It** ❤ **For Dolly Die-Hards Only**

"Songs, they're just stories put to music," says Dolly Parton in the trailer for the Netflix anthology *Heartstrings*. "And the songs I've written, they're the stories of my life." Here, we have eight sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes funny but always lovable minimovies all starring quality actors and featuring Dolly's music throughout. We dare you not to be moved by this visual album of her best loved songs.

"Jolene"
Arguably Dolly's most famous song, about a wife begging the "other woman" to please leave her husband alone, it's always been a romantic drama waiting to be filmed. Here, *Dancing with the Stars*' Julianne Hough plays the free-spirited Jolene, a talented singer-bartender sleeping around with married men and too insecure to seek a musical career in Nashville. Dolly appears as bar owner Babe, who kicks Jolene's butt toward stardom and a happy ending.
❤❤❤

"Down from Dover"
It may be set in the late '60s but it is by far the most contemporary of these TV interpretations. A young mixed-race couple fall madly in love just as he is shipped off to Vietnam, leaving her pregnant. Her racist father insists she go to a home for unwed mothers to give birth, and...we won't spoil it, but the emotional ending requires more than a few tissues to get through.
❤❤❤❤



Dolly introduces each of the episodes of *Heartstrings*, and appears in a few of them, too!

"Sugar Hill"
A love story as sweet as its name, reunites one of our favorite TV couples, *thirtysomething*'s Patricia Wettig and Timothy Busfield. On the surface, it's a memory piece about the duo's lifelong journey together and the bumps along the road. The unexpected ending, however, may leave your heart just a little bit broken.
❤❤❤

"Two Doors Down"
In the introduction to the episode, Dolly explains that the 1977 song, about a newly single gal lured to a fun party down the hallway, was inspired by her on-the-road family, a diverse crew of "gay, lesbian, transgender, different colors and all different faiths. What it all comes down to is love is love, in road families and real families." Not surprisingly, the TV version is a gay romance between a closeted man in love with his old-fashioned mother's handsome assistant.
❤❤❤

"JJ Sneed"
This 1880s Western follows the adventures of the outlaw JJ Sneed and Maddie Hawkes, his ride-or-die girlfriend. But if it's based on a Dolly song, you're going to get a mighty switcheroo at the story's end, and this episode certainly doesn't disappoint.
❤❤❤

"These Old Bones"
Much like the song, this series episode is about an old mountain clairvoyant, here played by Kathleen Turner, who helps a young D.C. lawyer (Ginnifer Goodwin) rediscover her Tennessee roots and uncover a deep, dark secret along the way.
❤

"Cracker Jack"
Dolly's song about her beloved dog, Cracker Jack, may be lightweight fluff, but this episode is much heavier fare. Four besties who grew up together—yes, they had a favorite pooch named Cracker Jack—gather for a weekend to catch up, only to discover one of them is struggling with an incurable condition. This is, perhaps, the most disjointed of the eight episodes, but it's still a tear-jerker, so keep that hanky nearby.
❤❤

"If I Had Wings"
In one of the most disturbing episodes, real-life spouses, Delta Burke and Gerald McRaney play a couple hiding a terrible secret. As she tries to heal old wounds between her husband and his estranged children, he comes to terms with his violent past. It's a little convoluted, but Delta and Gerald's chemistry make it worth your time.
❤

DYNAMIC DUOS

JUST THE Two of Us

She has shared the microphone with some of the world's most popular singers. Here are our favorite Dolly duets. BY ZAK WOJNAR

1 KENNY ROGERS

The onstage chemistry between Kenny Rogers and Dolly was the stuff of legend, to the point where many speculated the two may have had a secret affair (read about their relationship on page 30). Regardless of tabloid speculation, Rogers and Dolly were nonetheless a legendary duo. They recorded dozens of songs together, beginning with 1983's "Islands in the Stream," which was released on Rogers' *Eyes That See in the Dark* album. In 2005, the CMT network named the song the greatest country music duet of all time, and you'll hear no objections from us.

HIGH PRAISE
"Queen Latifah is strong and confident and definitely no pushover," Dolly told *Redbook*.

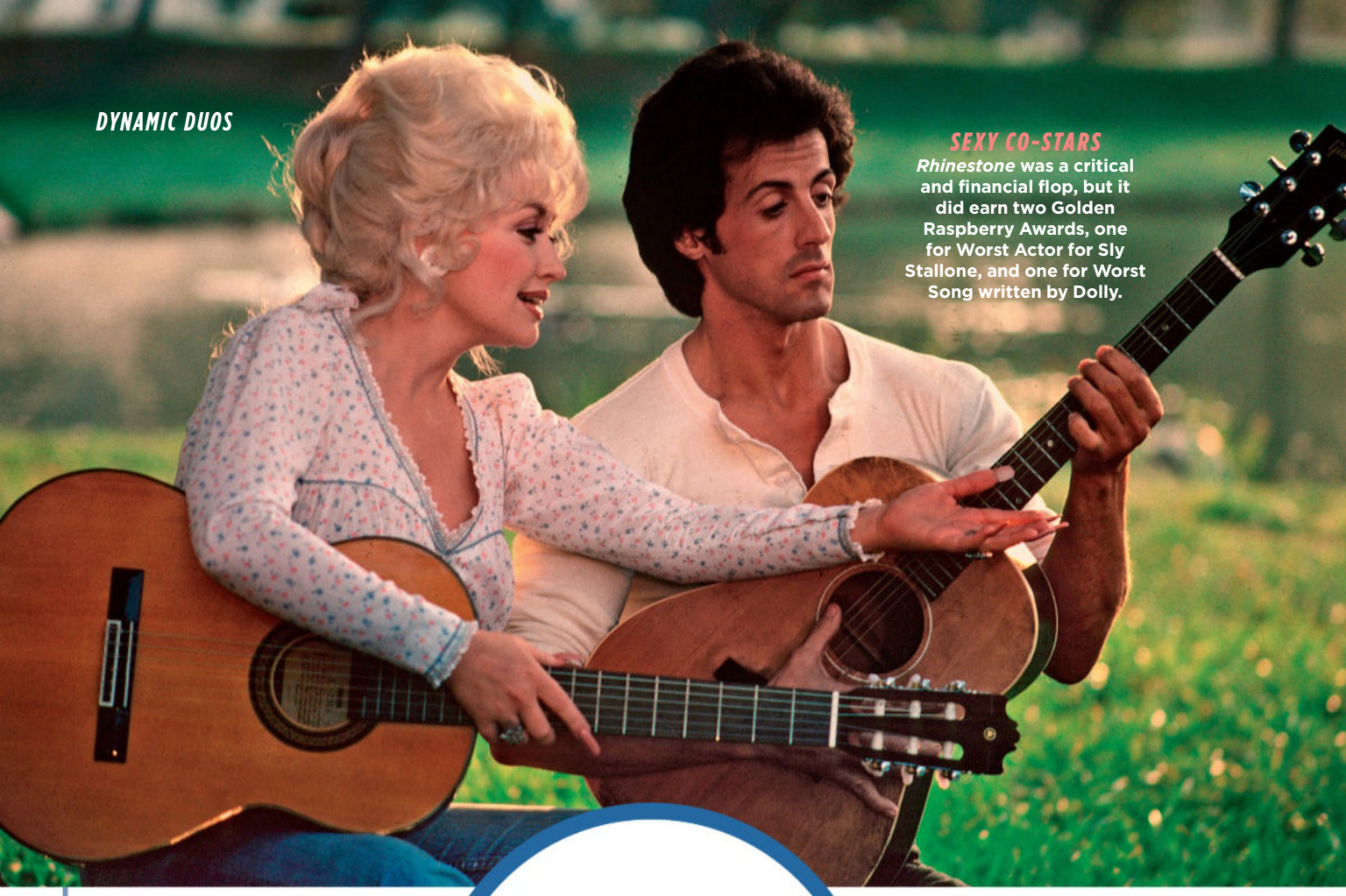
2 WILLIE NELSON

Willie Nelson and Dolly have always had a special relationship. "Willie and I are so similar," Dolly told CMT.com. "I've known him all the days I've been in Nashville, and I just love him." Over the years, Dolly collaborated with the great singer-songwriter on numerous occasions, including on the track, "Everything Is Beautiful (In Its Own Way)," which is notable for pairing Dolly's original vocal takes from 1966 with new vocals recorded by Nelson 15 years later. For the record, our favorite Dolly/Willie collaboration has to be their version of "From Here to the Moon and Back." Originally recorded by Dolly and Kris Kristofferson for 2012's *Joyful Noise* movie soundtrack, this version features Nelson's delicate vocals, adding an extra layer of bittersweet romanticism to the Dolly-penned ballad. It can be found on Dolly's 2014 album, *Blue Smoke*, as well as Nelson's 2013 compilation, *To All The Girls....*

3 QUEEN LATIFAH

The movie *Joyful Noise* pairs Dolly and Queen Latifah as mismatched opposites forced to work together to raise money for their church. It didn't aim to win Oscars, but anyone looking for two hours of inspirational music and verbal sparring sessions be-

THE PERFECT GIFT
Dolly and her longtime friend Willie Nelson have another duet on her newest album, *A Holly Dolly Christmas,* collaborating on his classic holiday song, "Pretty Paper."



SEXY CO-STARS
Rhinestone **was a critical and financial flop, but it did earn two Golden Raspberry Awards, one for Worst Actor for Sly Stallone, and one for Worst Song written by Dolly.**

tween Parton and Latifah will be more than satisfied by the 2012 drama. Speaking of gospel tunes, the soundtrack includes "Not Enough," a rousing anthem that features both leads on vocals. The soundtrack also features Kris Kristofferson singing with Dolly on "Here to the Moon and Back," a subtle and heart-wrenching duet written for her husband, Carl Dean, about everlasting love that not even death can conquer.

> ***"I was surprised when I first saw Sylvester Stallone. I thought he would be gigantic. But I loved working with him."***
> *DOLLY, TO* INTERVIEW *MAGAZINE*

4 NORAH JONES

Feels Like Home, the sophomore album by Norah Jones, and the second best-selling album of 2004, features a notable guest appearance from Dolly on the single, "Creepin' In." The stripped-down bluegrass track features Jones and Parton trading verses and harmonizing about the people and things that "creep" into our lives whether we want them there or not. At first, Jones wasn't sure she could get the country icon to do the duet, but for Dolly, the decision was a no-brainer. "It reminded me of the old Hank Williams song 'Hey, Good Lookin','" she told The Boot, a country music website. "It was cute, it was fun, and it fit my style."

5 KESHA

In 1980, Dolly scored a No. 1 hit from her *Dolly Dolly Dolly* album with her version of "Old Flames Can't Hold a Candle to You," co-written by Hugh Moffatt and Pebe Sebert. Decades later, Sebert's daughter, Kesha—yes, *that* Kesha—would record her own version for her 2012 *Warrior* CD as well as a duet with Dolly herself for her 2017 album *Rainbow*. Unlike most of Kesha's previous work, which critics agree was creatively stifled by the influence of her previous producer, Dr. Luke, *Rainbow* feels like it's her true statement to the world, and the presence of Dolly on this version speaks to a sisterhood that runs deep in the male-dominated music business.

6 SYLVESTER STALLONE

Despite the savage reviews of the musical movie *Rhinestone*, a quirky take on *My Fair Lady* that sees Dolly's character hoping to turn a belligerent New York cab driver (Sylvester Stallone) into a bona fide

country star, the soundtrack to the 1984 film is a real winner. Nearly every song on the album was written by Dolly herself, and she sings on most of them, though the younger Parton siblings Stella, Floyd and Randy, each get a turn at the microphone on their respective tunes. Obviously Stallone was never much of a singer, but his strained baritone actually pairs quite well with Dolly's signature chirpiness. "Stay Out of My Bedroom" is a classic.

7 JULIO IGLESIAS

Dolly teamed up with Spanish pop star Julio Iglesias for this 1994 cover of "When You Tell Me That You Love Me," originally recorded by Diana Ross in 1991. Her Appalachian accent fits nicely with Iglesias' righteous vibrato, and the song remains one of Dolly's most noteworthy '90s tunes. The track was released on Iglesias' album *Crazy*, and the steamy music video features some classic mid-'90s imagery of Dolly, wearing a sexy—but not-too-revealing–nightgown, singing sensually through a rain-washed window while young lovers make passionate love inside, all captured in classy black and white.

8 PORTER WAGONER

To this day, Porter Wagoner and Dolly are one of the most iconic duos in musical history, defining an entire era of country music. Wagoner once said modestly, "We were the first ones to really get into the mainstream with duets. All the other duets came after us." Between 1968 and 1980, they would record 13 albums together, with their final release, *Porter & Dolly*, composed entirely of overdubbed outtakes from their earlier sessions. Even so, the album still managed to spend 31 weeks on the Billboard charts and both of its singles, "If You Go, I'll Follow You" and "Making Plans," became solid hits for the erstwhile duo.

HONKY TONK ANGELS

Dolly, Linda Ronstadt and Emmylou Harris are the singing "sisters" behind *Trio*.

After over a decade of false starts, abandoned sessions and scheduling conflicts, Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt finally released *Trio* in 1987. The long-awaited collaboration had been hinted at in various solo projects, with one-off collaborations on Ronstadt's 1982 album, *Get Closer*, Harris's *Blue Kentucky Girl*, released in 1979, and other guest appearances. Despite the album's long road to release, most fans agree, the final product was worth the wait. The record was a huge success for the singers and went on to sell over four million copies worldwide.

Over a decade later, *Trio II* came out, a sequel that brought the three icons together once again. While not as commercially successful as the original, the record is arguably superior to its predecessor. At the 2000 Grammy Awards, Dolly, Harris and Ronstadt won the Best Country Collaboration with Vocals award for their cover of Neil Young's "After the Gold Rush," which also has a haunting and melancholy music video.

Finally, Rhino Records released "The Complete Trio Collection" in 2016, compiling the first two albums and a third disc of previously unreleased recordings. It's the ultimate tool to become an instant scholar on three beloved American treasures. Will we ever receive *Trio III*? In 2019, the group was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, fueling speculation that a new collaboration might be in the works, but it seems unlikely. While Dolly and Harris are still active musicians, Ronstadt retired from singing back in 2011 and hasn't released any music since 2006's *Adieu False Heart*, with Ann Savoy. Because of her Parkinson's disease, she's likely done singing forever; however, her life and career were celebrated in the 2019 documentary *Linda Ronstadt: The Sound of My Voice*.

LIVING LEGEND

Dolly received the Willie Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award at the 50th Annual CMA Awards in 2016. "I would cry," she said, "but I don't want to mess up my eyelashes."

AWARD-WINNING STAR

WE WILL ALWAYS Honor You

The Queen of Country has been nominated for—and won—almost every prize out there! Check out some of her greatest trophy-snatching moments. BY CLAIRE CONNORS

OVER HER LIFETIME, DOLLY HAS BEEN RECOG-nized for her talent and philanthropy by almost every prestigious entertainment organization in the world! Since 1966, when she picked up her very first prize—a BMI Award for writing the song "Put It Off Until Tomorrow"—she's been nominated for 416 awards and has taken home 153. "Not bad for a country girl from the Appalachian Mountains," she said when she was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1999, one of only 20 women—ever—to receive that honor.

For 40 years, she's been gracing the Grammy stage, having been nominated 51 times and picking up 11 awards, including 2020's Best Contemporary Christian Music Performance/Song for "God Only Knows" with For King & Country. She's a regular on the international country and gospel music award stages, of course, but she's also been recognized at the Academy Awards, the Emmys, the Golden Globes, and she was the recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors in 2006.

YOU GLOW, GIRL

In 1975, Dolly picked up her first Country Music Association Award for Female Vocalist of the Year. She got a second—and last one—in 1976; she has been nominated four times.

But perhaps Dolly's favorite awards have been in tribute of her philanthropic work. In the spring of 2009, she picked up an honorary doctorate from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, for her work with her Imagination Library (to read more about that incredible organization, go to page 84). In her acceptance speech, she spoke, and joked—she is Dolly after all—about the power of believing in yourself. She started out saying she rarely gives advice because it may not be right for everyone else. "Take, for instance, what has worked for me. Wigs, tight clothes, pushup bras, five-inch high-heel shoes. All I got to say, take my advice and some of you boys out there may find yourself on a little different career path than you might have planned." She went on to encourage the new graduates to dream more, learn more, care more and be more. The speech was so well-received it was made into a book called *Dream More: Celebrate the Dreamer in You*.

And finally, in 2019 she was named *MusiCares Person of the Year*, recognizing her humanitarian efforts, most notably her charitable work for eastern Tennessee after the Great Smoky Mountains wildfires in 2016. The first country star to receive the honor, Dolly gushed in her acceptance speech, "It's a long, long way from the hills of East Tennessee to the Hollywood Hills, but it has been a wonderful journey."

IN LIVING COLOR

She received the Tex Ritter Award in 2016 at the 51st Academy of Country Music Awards, for her movie, *Dolly Parton's Coat of Many Colors*.

A COUNTRY MILESTONE

Being inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame is one of the greatest honors for a musician, especially for a female. Of the 142 inductees, only 20 are women.

WALK THE WALK
Dolly received her first Hollywood Walk of Fame star in 1984, with "Mayor" Johnny Grant at her side. In 2018, she got a second, along with her *Trio* sisters, Linda Ronstadt and Emmylou Harris.

1977

1979

1979

1980

PICTURE PERFECT

HOT AS A

1987

1978

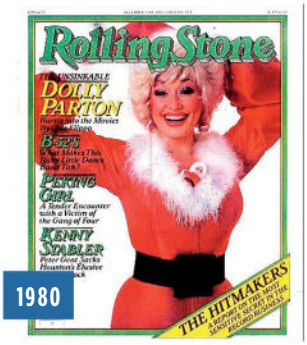
1989

2008

2013

THE COMEBACK KID

Forty-two years after appearing as a "Bunny" on the cover of *Playboy*, the singer hopes to recreate the image for her 75th birthday!



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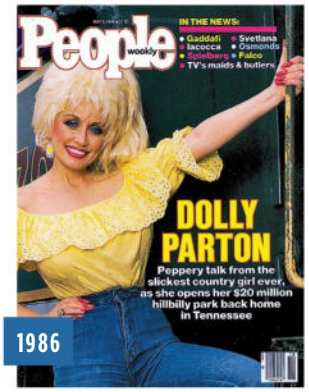

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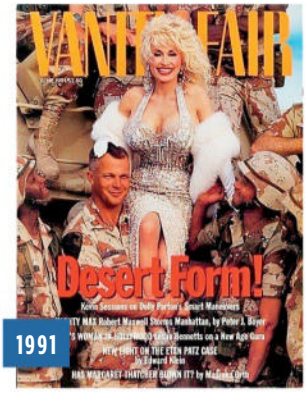
1987

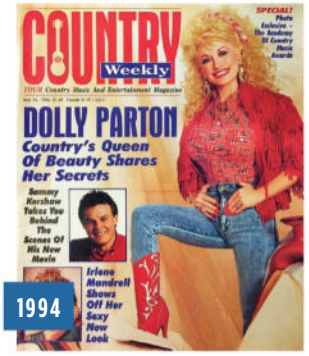
Pistol

From Playboy *to* Rolling Stone *to* Billboard, *Dolly has magazines covered.*

1989



1991



1994

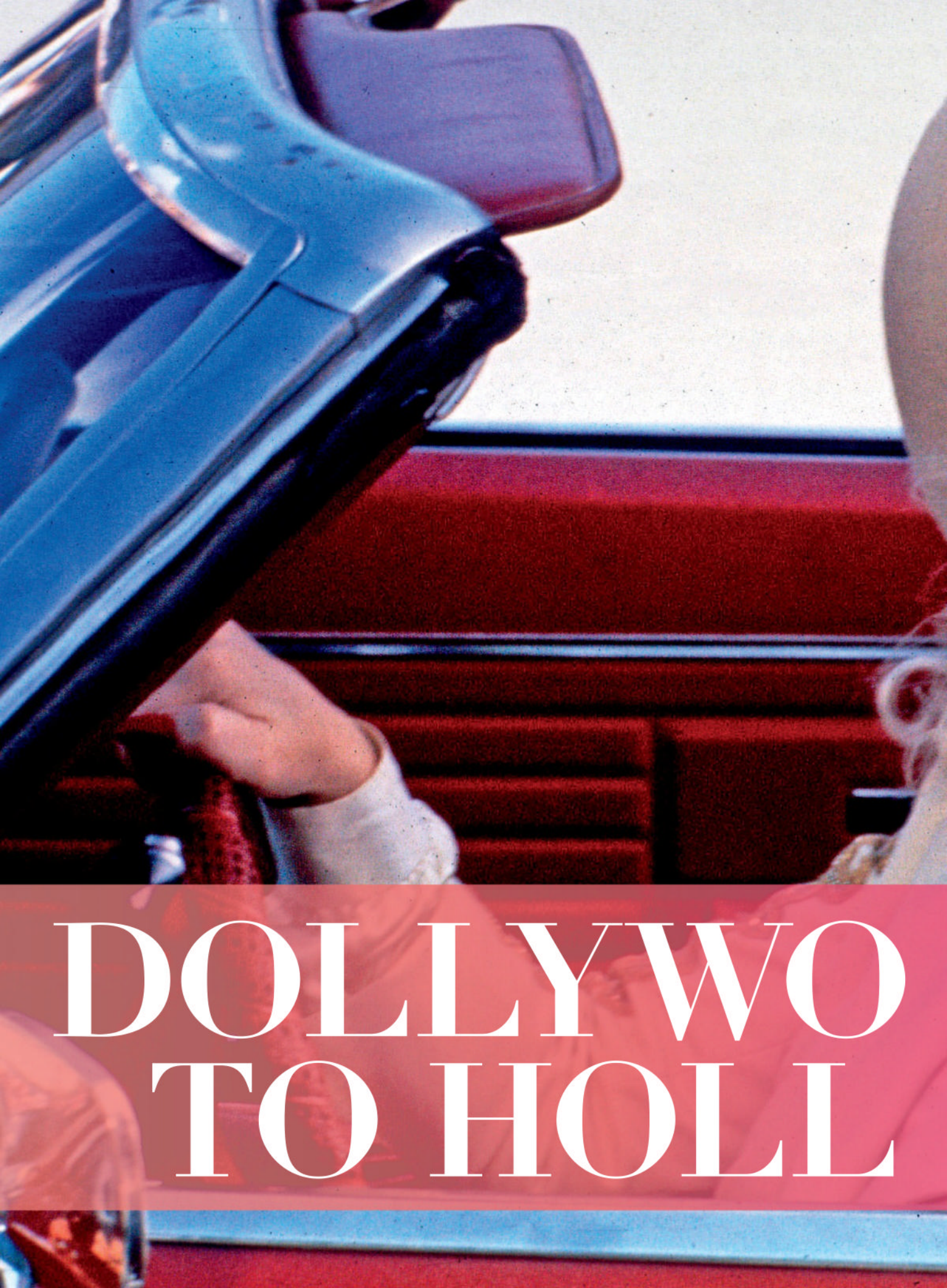
1997

2015

2016

2019

2020



DOLLYWO TO HOLL

ROLE MODEL
"The Hollywood version of country and mountain people has always bothered me," Dolly said in *Interview* magazine. "They usually make us a lot more stupid and dumb than we really are."

OD YWOOD

9 TO 5 WAS A GAME CHANGER IN DOLLY'S CAREER, TURNING HER INTO A MOVIE STAR AND A TINSELTOWN POWER PLAYER.

LEADING LADY

A STAR IS Born

Dolly was almost 36 when her first big-screen moment arrived in 1980, and she wowed everyone from the critics to film-industry insiders to audiences with her natural-born talent and dazzling charm. BY JOANNA CONNORS

THREE'S COMPANY
Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Dolly starred in the 1980 comedy *9 to 5*, which was the singer's film debut. It earned over $100 million at the box office and two Grammys for Dolly's irresistible title song.

DOUBLE TROUBLE
The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, **co-starring Burt Reynolds, may have bombed in 1992 at the box office, but we did get a newer version of Dolly's song "I Will Always Love You" out of it.**

DOLLY KNEW SHE WOULD STAR IN THE MOVIES some day. She wrote it down on her famous list, her preferred method for plotting her career, and applied her power of positive thinking. So it had to come true.

Her music always came first, though, so Dolly took her sweet Tennessee time getting to Hollywood, waiting for the right moment and the right movie. And boy, was she picky! "Movies were another thing I didn't want to do until I felt I was ready," she told *Rolling Stone*. "Sometimes if you jump into something too quickly, you can screw up something that might have been good two years down the road."

By 1979, she'd been reading scripts for months but not finding anything she liked. Then Jane Fonda called. She told Dolly about a movie she was putting together through her new production company, IPC Films, called *9 to 5*. She said Dolly would be perfect for one of the three lead roles, along with Lily Tomlin and Fonda herself.

Ever practical, Parton made a pure-Dolly calculation when it came to making her decision. "It just seemed like it would be a good idea, working for the first time in a film with great people like Jane and Lily," she said at the press event before the movie's premiere in 1980. She added with a laugh, "I figured if it was a success,

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE
In 1990, Dolly guested on the hit comedy *Designing Women*, set in Atlanta, playing an angelic "Guardian Movie Star" who keeps Charlene (Jean Smart) calm before giving birth.

then we would all enjoy the benefits, and if it was a flop, they could take the blame for it."

The goofy, slapstick comedy was about three secretaries who dream up outrageous ways to get revenge on their "sexist, egotistical, lying, hypocritical bigot" of a boss, played to smarmy perfection by Dabney Coleman.

Though some of her country fans bashed her (and eventually forgave her) for appearing in a movie with "Hanoi Jane," *9 to 5* did just what Dolly envisioned: It launched her entire career into the Hollywood stratosphere, where she would share the screen with the industry's biggest stars of the era: Burt Reynolds, Sylvester Stallone, Julia Roberts, Sally Field and Shirley MacLaine.

Here's how Roger Ebert, soon to be one of the most famous movie critics in America at that time, started his review: "*9 to 5* is a good-hearted, simple-minded comedy that will win a place in film history, I suspect, primarily because it contains the movie debut of Dolly Parton. She is, on the basis of this one film, a natural-born movie star, a performer who holds our attention so easily that it's hard to believe it's her first film."

Ebert was not alone in his fandom. Audiences also loved her, and *9 to 5* went on to become the highest-grossing comedy of 1980. On top of that, Dolly had so impressed film-industry insiders that she had her second big movie deal signed before *9 to 5* even opened.

The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, released in 1982, paired Dolly—as the madam of a brothel—with Burt Reynolds, then the top male movie star in Hollywood. The film produced middling reviews, great box office returns and two long-running rumors. Dolly denied and laughed off the first one, that she and her co-star had an affair during filming. The second, opposite rumor—that they did not get along at all—appears to have had some truth. "Burt and I had our little arguments and little spats," Dolly told the *Daily Mirror* years later, adding that Reynolds was a pretty bad singer. "He could sing as good as Sylvester Stallone, put it that way," she said slyly.

Stallone co-starred in her third big film of the '80s, *Rhinestone*. The 1984 release was a critical and commercial flop—Sly's singing must've been even worse than Burt's—but Dolly and Stallone became fast friends, with Dolly crediting him with helping her through troubled times that included suicidal thoughts. "[He] was so full of life, and so crazy and so funny and he made me laugh a lot, which was real healthy for me," she told *Rolling Stone*. "That movie got me back on track."

HUGGIN' IT OUT
Dolly's godchild, Miley Cyrus, gave the singer a big popularity boost amongst millennial fans when she got her a role on the hit Nickelodeon show *Hannah Montana*.

Stallone returned the affection. "Dolly called [about the project] and we began a conversation that lasted at least two hours, and by the time I hung up I thought she was the most amazing person I'd ever spoken to. She knew something about everything," he told aintitcool.com.

> **"I relate to someone like Mae West—I'm little and overexaggerated, very outgoing and ballsy."**
> *DOLLY, TO* INTERVIEW *MAGAZINE*

With her next movie, *Steel Magnolias,* the 1989 Southern-fried comedy that's laced with melodrama, Dolly once again joined an ensemble cast of strong, funny women that included Field, Roberts, MacLaine, Olympia Dukakis and Daryl Hannah. Dolly played beautician and town gossip Truvy Jones, whose signature line aptly described the film's vibe: "Laughter through tears is my favorite emotion."

Dolly's keen instincts as a businesswoman, honed through her music career, soon extended to movies and TV. In 1986, she teamed up with her then-manager, Sandy Gallin, to form Sandollar Productions. The company has been involved in many big-screen movies, including *Father of the Bride I* and *II*. But only one of them was a vehicle for

Dolly—the forgettable 1992 *Straight Talk*. Dolly starred as the improbable host of a popular radio advice show opposite James Woods as a reporter who investigates her fake title of "doctor" but then—naturally!—falls for her.

It bombed with critics and the moviegoing public. Though Dolly continued to act in seven other movies after that, mostly doing cameos and secondary roles, she and Sandollar soon turned their attention to television. Take a guess what show became the company's biggest TV success? Surprise! *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

Though Dolly never played a role in that long-running hit series, she went all-in with television, amassing more than 400 TV appearances and making many commercials, from Breeze detergent to the Golden Nugget casino. She started young, making her TV debut at the age of 10 on the *Cas Walker Farm and Home Hour*, a country variety show created to promote Cas Walker's chain of grocery stores. But Dolly's real, career-making TV break came in 1967, when Porter Wagoner, one of the biggest country stars of the 1960s, asked her to be the "girl singer" on his Nashville variety show.

She headlined her own variety show twice—both called *Dolly*—first in 1976 to '77 and again in 1987 to '88. She has appeared in episodes of everything from *Captain Kangaroo* and *Sesame Street* (as Polly Darton) to *The Bachelorette* and the Duggar family's *17 Kids and Counting*. She was Aunt Dolly on three episodes of *Hannah Montana*, starring her goddaughter, Miley Cyrus, and played herself in *Dolly Parton's Coat of Many Colors* and *Christmas of Many Colors*.

And let's not forget *Dolly Parton's Heartstrings*, a Netflix series of eight episodes, each inspired by one of her songs. One episode, "These Old Bones," earned a 2020 Emmy nomination. (Read about it on page 53.)

All that, and the country girl still had time to start an internet meme! In January 2020, she posted a collage of four photos of herself online, each representing a social-media profile picture. There's one for Facebook (in a *Holly Dolly Christmas* sweater), one for Instagram (an old album cover of Dolly in jeans with her guitar) LinkedIn (in a business suit) and Tinder (in her famous *Playboy* bunny outfit).

The meme went viral as #DollyPartonChallenge, with such celebs as Jennifer Garner, Ellen DeGeneres, Oprah Winfrey and Miley Cyrus posting their own collages. She captioned it: "Get you a woman who can do it all." The world would expect nothing less from Dolly Parton.

FLOWER GIRLS Dolly and the great Olympia Dukakis co-starred in the 1989 tear-jerker, *Steel Magnolias*.

"I'm not a perfectionist. I like things done properly but not at the risk of not gettin' to enjoy the work, period."

DOLLY, TO INTERVIEW *MAGAZINE*

FRINGE BENEFITS
Sesame Street **created a country-western singing Muppet based on Dolly named Polly Darton.**

BLACK LIMOZEEN
Dolly played a radio talk show host in the 1992 dramedy *Straight Talk*, co-starring the delightful Griffin Dunne as her rich boss.

DOLLY'S LIVING THE AMERICAN STREAM

The singer-songwriter has dipped her acrylic nails into every area of entertainment, except podcasts...until now.

What started as a course offered at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, titled "Dolly Parton's America," became one of the best podcasts in 2019. Written, produced and hosted by Jad Abumrad of "Radiolab" fame, alongside producer Shima Oliaee, the nine-part nonfiction series does a deep and, at times, deeply profound dive into what they call the Dollyverse. Their goal: to answer the all-important question: Why does everyone love the entertainer?

For Abumrad, he was practically born loving Dolly. The son of Lebanese immigrant parents, the Oberlin College grad was raised in Nashville, about a three-hour drive from where Dolly grew up in Sevierville, Tennessee. Her very presence was so ingrained in his childhood that all of his school class trips were visits to Dollywood, the singer-songwriter's popular theme park near her hometown (go to page 32 to "visit" Dollywood).

To record the podcast, he and Oliaee spent two years following the prolific artist around the world, interviewing her on topics as varied as her love of "sad-ass songs" (episode 1) to "Dollitics" (episode 5), in which the singer explains why she doesn't like to talk about political issues. In the particularly emotional second episode, "Neon Moss," Abumrad introduces his physician father, Naji Abumrad, MD, a doctor who has a surprising connection with the singer.

The podcast is a fascinating delve into Dolly's world, filled with her music—played by her and other artists—and is a beautiful reminder as to why the singer is considered a national treasure.

To return to the original question, Abumrad thinks Dolly is universally adored because she has truly lived the American dream. "It's the story of an America that we still want to believe is true," he told WBIR-TV. "That you can grow up in a tiny cabin in the mountains with no running water, and you can come down that mountain and conquer the world."

"Dolly Parton's America" is available wherever you listen to podcasts.

1 Oakland Coliseum, 1978 2 Performing for the troops in Alcoa, Tennessee, 2004 3 Christmas at Rockefeller Center, 2016 4 Dolly performs in London, 1983 5 A publicity photo for *Rhinestone* 6 Dolly visits *The Tonight Show*, 2016

TRASH TALK
Her most famous self-deprecating Dollyism: "It costs a lot of money to look this cheap!"

FUN FIERCE FEMALE

BLONDE Bombshell

A look at Dolly's sequined costumes, skyscraper wigs, glitzy makeup and, last but certainly not least, her bodacious bod!

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GIDDY-UP GET-UPS

"I never met a rhinestone I didn't love."

Dolly's come a long way from that ragged "coat of many colors that my mama made for me" 70 years ago. The superstar has transformed from a Southern-fried country gal in gingham and lace, to a rhinestone cowgirl in flashy gowns, to a glamorous style icon with real fashion cred. "I just wanted to be pretty," Dolly told *Elle*. "I wanted to be seen! When I went to Nashville, I always overdid it." Still, Dolly knows the best accessory isn't anything you can buy. "If you see somebody without a smile," she says, "give 'em yours!"

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WHAT A TEASE!

The star's mane events are legendary.

What was young Dolly's hair philosophy? Go big or go home! At first, she did her own teasing and bleaching until, finally her hair "just broke off. So, I thought, Why not just wear wigs? That way I'll never have a bad hair day," she explained to the Hallmark Channel. She revealed to talk show host Wendy Williams that underneath the fake tresses lies blond shoulder-length hair. And how many wigs does she have in real life? "Since I wear one about every day," she responded, "I must have at least 365."

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WIGGED OUT!
"I started wearing my hair real big because my own hair won't do everything that I want it to," she said in *Interview.*

1 Dolly on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, 1987 2 Performing at a California concert, 1980 3 Stunning in 1987 4 Appearing in London, 1983 5 Posing for a publicity photo in Los Angeles, 1985 6 In concert in Illinois, 1986

1 Showing off those acrylic nails in Hollywood, 2015
2 At the Carousel of Hope Ball, 1983
3 At the American Music Awards, 1978
4 At the Savoy Hotel, London, 2011
5 Performing in a yellow gown, Los Angeles, circa 1975

BEAUTY QUEEN

"I love the makeup because it makes me feel radiant," she said in *Interview*. "I just feel that part of the magic that I may have is that I look totally artificial but that I'm totally real."

1

2

3

THE BRIGHTEST STAR

We'll never see Dolly without her paint and polish.

"If I go anywhere, I go in full disguise," Dolly jokes about her colorful approach to makeup and fashion. "I'm afraid somebody will say, 'Oh, did you see Dolly? She looked like hell.' I'd rather them say, 'Did you see Dolly? She's so overdone.'" And don't expect age to stop this woman from proudly painting herself like a peacock, which she's unapologetically done from a very young age. "I wear makeup, and it gets a little bit thicker every year," the over-the-top beauty admits.

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NIP AND TUCK

"I'll never graduate from collagen," Dolly jokes.

Since she first stepped in front of a camera, Dolly's "assets" were the butt of many jokes, mostly from her own mouth. For example, a few years ago she said that she'd never run for president because "there are already enough boobs in the White House." While questions about surgical procedures have traditionally been a no-no, she's much more open about the subject these days, famously saying, "If I see something saggin', baggin' or draggin', I'm gone have it nipped, tucked or sucked!"

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BREAST DRESSED

"I had my boobs lifted when they started dragging on the floor," she admitted to the *London Mirror.* "Who would want to look at them if they were like that?"

1 New York City, circa 1981
2 At the SAG Awards show, Los Angeles, 2017
3 With Pee Wee Herman (Paul Reubens) on her variety show, 1987 **4** At the Grammys, 2019 **5** Spoofing Madonna in Oklahoma, 1992
6 Arriving at the Academy Awards, Los Angeles, 2006

SPREADING THE WORD

WRITE On

The Smoky Mountain Songbird never slows down; she is also about to release her seventh book. BY CATHY CAVENDER

THERE WEREN'T MANY books in the humble one-bedroom cabin where Dolly grew up dirt-poor (her words) with 11 brothers and sisters. In fact, there was just one—the Bible. It wasn't until she went to school and began reading fairy tales that she was introduced to the magic of reading. "The only thing I ever saw growing up was poor people in overalls and brogan shoes and ragged clothes," Dolly told *Good Housekeeping* magazine. "But in my books, I would read about kings and queens with their velvet clothes and big diamond rings. That's how I knew there was a world outside the Smoky Mountains. And because I felt comfortable in those stories, I knew it would be okay for me to go out in that world. My books kept me from being afraid.

HITTING THE BOOKS
Early in the pandemic, Dolly read children's stories on YouTube, in a series called "Goodnight with Dolly."

"As a kid, I read anything I could get my hands on," Dolly continued. "Even when my aunts and uncles would send up old newspapers and catalogs for us to use as toilet paper, I would always read them first."

With that kind of passion for words and knowledge, perhaps it's not so surprising that Dolly would grow up to be not only a wildly successful and prolific songwriter, but the author of several books herself.

Just the Way I Am, a collection of poetry composed of song lyrics from the singer-songwriter's most treasured works, was published by Blue Mountain Arts in 1979. Fifteen years later, she hit it big with her autobiography, *Dolly: My Life and Other Unfinished Business* (HarperCollins), which was on *The New York Times* best-seller list for two months. She promoted the book extensively, including an appearance on *The Late Show with David Letterman* doing a hilarious Top 10 list of the "surprises" in the autobiography. A couple of zingers included: "At birth, the doctor thought he was delivering triplets," and "Went on world tour in early '70s with the Dalai Lama in a show called 'A Couple of Dollys.'" Of the experience, Dolly said on her website, "I love that people can laugh at my expense. It isn't like I didn't leave myself wide open for all of this!"

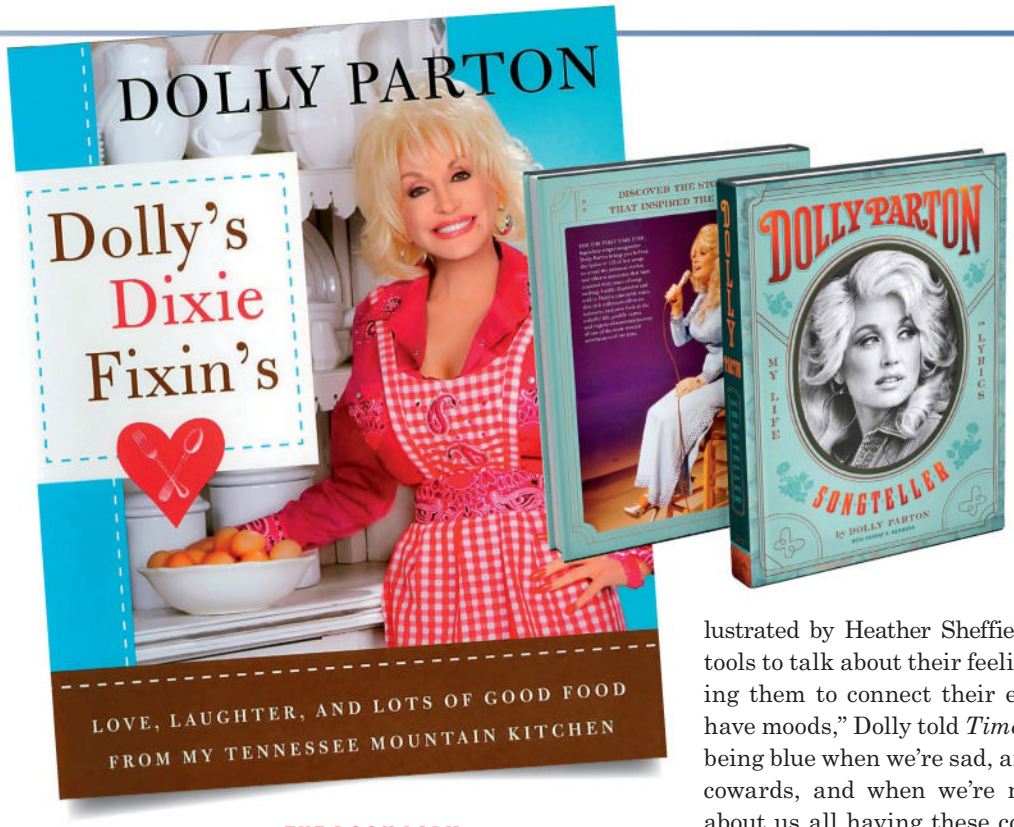
In 1996, Dolly published her first children's book, *A Coat of Many Colors* (HarperCollins), based on one of her best-loved songs and an important childhood memory. With no money to buy a new coat for the winter, Dolly's mother sewed her one out of rags. Dolly proudly wore that patchwork coat to school, only to be

TELLING HER STORY

Dolly's 1984 autobiography covers the highs—her spectacular career and happy marriage—and the lows of growing up poor and often hungry in the Appalachian Mountains.

PAGE TURNER

"I spend so much time reading," Dolly told *O* magazine, "people say, 'When do you have time?' But when I wake up in the middle of the night, I'll read. I read myself to sleep. I don't watch TV that much. I prefer to read."



THE BOOK LADY

All of Dolly's books are drawn from her real life, from her family recipes to the true stories behind her songs.

ridiculed by the other children for being poor. Dolly explains to her classmates that something made with love is more valuable than gold, concluding the song with, "Now I know we had no money, but I was rich as I could be, in my coat of many colors my momma made for me." The heartfelt book featured paintings by Judith Sutton and was rereleased in 2016 by Grosset & Dunlap with all new illustrations by Brooke Boynton Hughes. The book inspired two made-for-TV movies: *Dolly Parton's Coat of Many Colors*, in 2015, and *Dolly Parton's Christmas of Many Colors: Circle of Love*, the following year.

Proving that there's practically nothing The Queen of Country can't do, she published a cookbook, *Dolly's Dixie Fixin's: Love, Laughter and Lots of Good Food from My Tennessee Mountain Kitchen* (Viking Studio/Penguin Group) in 2006. While Dolly says she enjoys trying new foods as often as she can, "When it comes to cooking for myself and my husband, Carl, and my great big extended family, which numbers into the multiple hundreds these days, what we really want to eat is what comforts us most: good, hearty food rooted in Mama's cooking and those country gatherings of my childhood."

The fun cookbook includes 125 recipes from her mother, her husband's mother, Dollywood eateries, Dollywood Stampede kitchens, and her travels and meals while out on the road.

Three years later, Dolly published her second children's book, *I Am a Rainbow* (Putnam). Illustrated by Heather Sheffield, the book gives children tools to talk about their feelings and emotions by teaching them to connect their emotions to colors. "We all have moods," Dolly told *Time* magazine. "We talk about being blue when we're sad, and being yellow when we're cowards, and when we're mad, we're red. It's really about us all having these colors and...learning how to deal with them and what to do with them."

That same busy year, Dolly delivered a wildly successful commencement speech at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She walked away from the ceremony not only with an honorary doctorate of humane and musical letters, but with the idea for her next book, *Dream More: Celebrate the Dreamer in You* (Penguin), published in 2012. Motivated by the positive reaction she received to her address, the book explains her personal philosophy and is a collection of stories from her life that she hoped would help other people take charge of theirs.

> ***"I have a favorite Southern writer named Lee Smith. She writes about country and mountain people."***
>
> DOLLY, TO O MAGAZINE

Perhaps the most exciting of all of Dolly's books for her fans, however, is the upcoming *Dolly Parton Songteller: My Life in Lyrics* (Chronicle), written with Robert K. Oermann, out Nov. 17. Looking back over six decades of songwriting, Dolly spotlights 175 of her tunes, including "Jolene," "9 to 5" and "I Will Always Love You," and shares the stories and memories behind the lyrics. The volume is described as both a visual memoir and an annotated songbook. "I've revisited my memories and opened up my archives to share the stories and treasures behind them in a way I never have before," Dolly said in a statement. The book includes previously unseen photographs and rare memorabilia and will sell for $50. Could there be a better Christmas present for any Dolly fan?

SINGING SAVIOR

MOUNTAIN Angel

Dolly's global reading project has brought millions of books to kids around the world. Her good works don't stop there! BY CATHY CAVENDER

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME, THE SAYING GOES, and Dolly's biggest charitable efforts started out benefiting people near her hometown of Sevierville, Tennessee—and have spread throughout the world. Back in 1988, she started The Dollywood Foundation to encourage kids in her home county to stay in school. The Buddy Program promised every seventh- and eighth-grade student $500 if they graduated from high school, and it worked—the dropout rate for those classes fell from 35% to 6%.

These days, the Foundation's flagship program is the Imagination Library, which launched in 1995 to encourage a love of books and reading among preschool children. By all measures, it's a runaway success. The program was inspired by Dolly's love for her illiterate father, Robert Lee Parton. "He was the smartest man I've ever known, but I know in my heart that his inability to read probably kept him from fulfilling all of his dreams," Dolly has said. The program enrolls children up to age 5 and sends a free, specially selected book to their home each month. Working with local partners, the program went national in 2004 and has since expanded to Canada, Ireland, the U.K. and Australia. It has distributed over 141 million free books to date (Dolly presented a copy of *Coat of Many Colors* to the Library of Congress to mark the delivery of her 100th million donation), ensuring that every kid could have books, no matter what their family's income. "Before my daddy passed away," Dolly said, "he told me that the Imagination Library was probably the most important thing I had ever done."

> **"I do a lot of work around the country for different charities, but mostly I try to help in my part of the country."**
> *DOLLY, TO* INTERVIEW *MAGAZINE*

Dolly sprang into action on behalf of her beloved mountain home, again, in 2016 when wildfires devastated the Smoky Mountains in East Tennessee. The Dollywood Foundation set up the My People Fund to raise and distribute money just 48 hours later, despite the fact that the singer was in the middle of a tour. Her staff organized a three-hour telethon with Dolly and friends, including Reba McEntire, Kenny Rogers and Cyndi Lauper. Ultimately more than $12 million was collected for the cause. Nearly 900 families who lost their homes received $1,000 a month for five months plus an additional $5,000, an idea The Dollywood Foundation's CEO David Dotson credited directly to Dolly. "She wanted to put money into the hands of the people who lost their homes," he said. Added Dolly, "I know $10,000 can't solve everything, but

SMALL WONDERS

"Oh, kids love me. I'm like Mother Goose to them. I'm a cartoon character," Dolly told HuffPost.com. "I'm joyful with kids and they feel that. They feel that I love them."

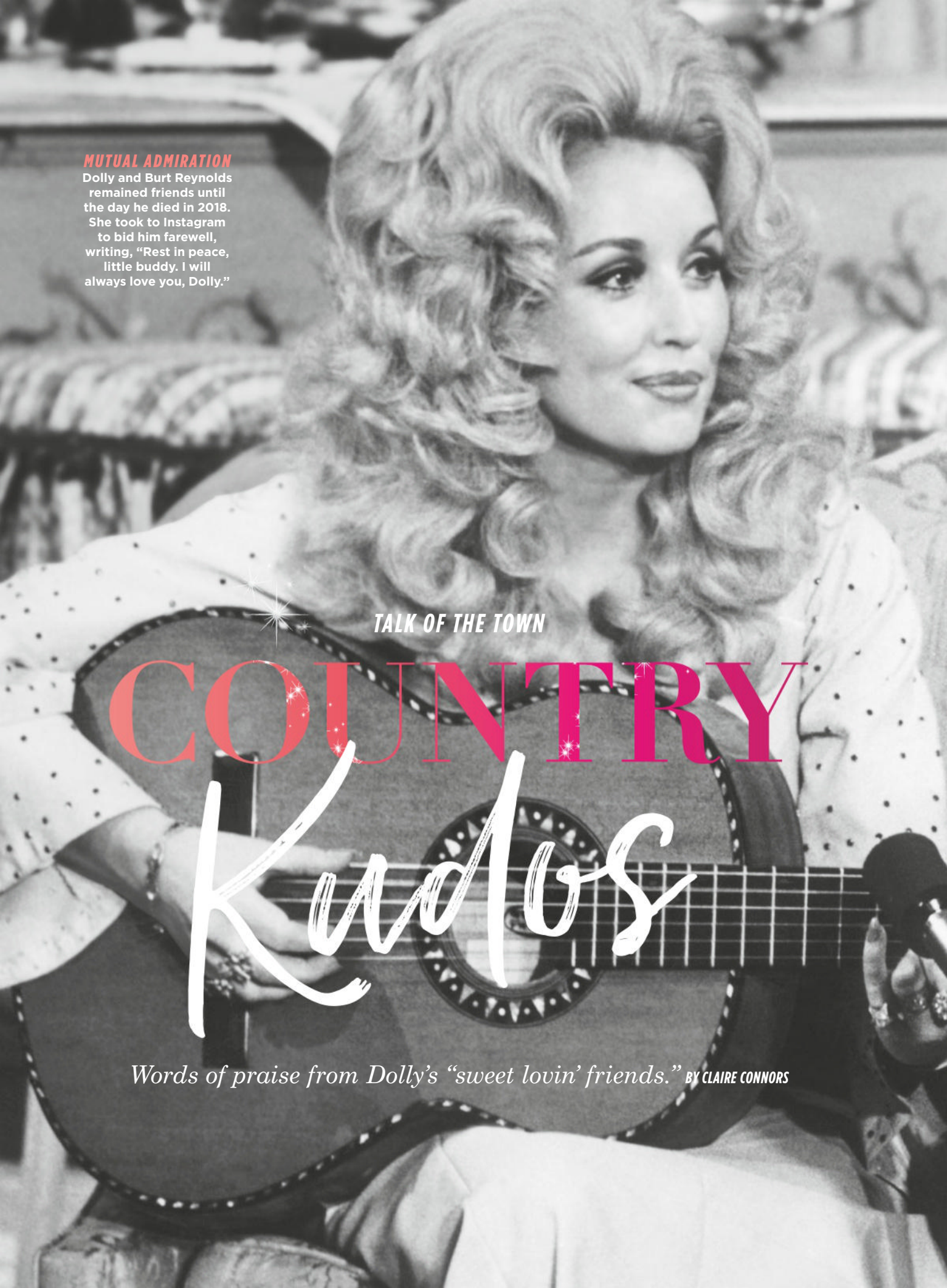
STRUMMING UP SUPPORT

This Fender guitar was auctioned off at the MusiCares Person of the Year Tribute for Dolly in 2019. She and stars like Pink and Norah Jones signed it for the highest bidder.

I do hope the money will help them dream again." The fund also donated $200,000 to eight volunteer fire departments in the area and gave $3 million to Mountain Tough Recovery Team, a group aiding wildfire recovery.

Last year, Dolly helped raise more than $6.7 million for MusiCares, a program that helps musicians with addiction and recovery rehab, among other issues, when she was honored as the Recording Academy's MusiCares Person of the Year—the first country artist to receive the accolade. At the star-studded event, musicians performed Dolly's songs and her goddaughter Miley Cyrus introduced Dolly's performance of "Coat of Many Colors," telling the crowd, "She's not just my fairy godmother, she's everyone's." Auction items included a guitar signed by Dolly and friends (left), and a meet-and-greet with the singer at Dollywood, including receiving a costume from her closet. Miley nabbed that prize for $90,000.

And the good works keep coming. In July of this year, Dolly performed at the 31st GLAAD Media Awards virtual gala along with "Old Town Road" rapper Lil Nas X. A longtime supporter of LGBTQ rights, she advocated for gay marriage on *The Joy Behar Show* back in 2010. "I always say, 'Why can't they get married?'" Dolly said with a laugh. "They should suffer like the rest of us!"

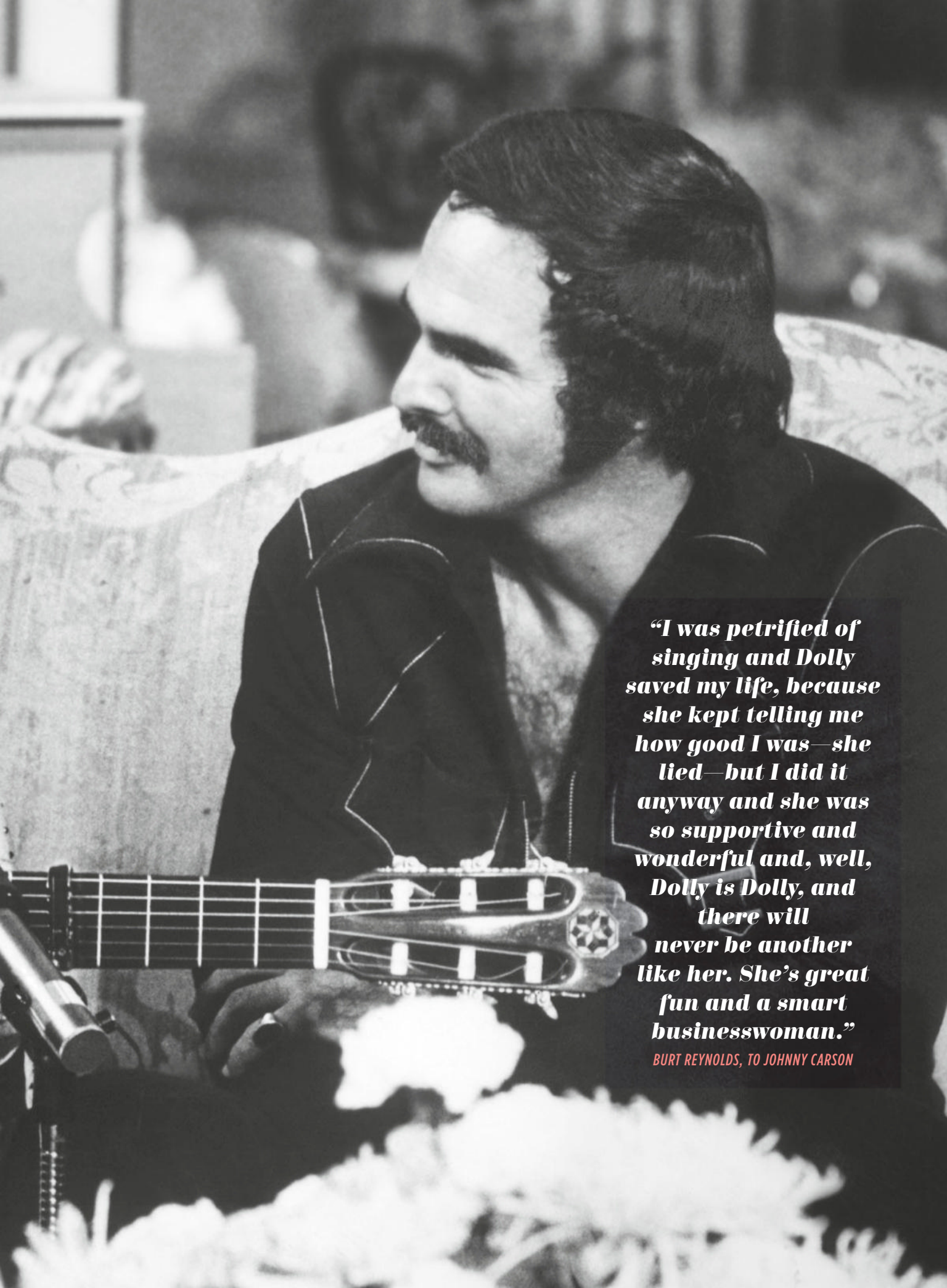


MUTUAL ADMIRATION
Dolly and Burt Reynolds remained friends until the day he died in 2018. She took to Instagram to bid him farewell, writing, "Rest in peace, little buddy. I will always love you, Dolly."

TALK OF THE TOWN

COUNTRY Kudos

Words of praise from Dolly's "sweet lovin' friends." BY CLAIRE CONNORS



"I was petrified of singing and Dolly saved my life, because she kept telling me how good I was—she lied—but I did it anyway and she was so supportive and wonderful and, well, Dolly is Dolly, and there will never be another like her. She's great fun and a smart businesswoman."

BURT REYNOLDS, TO JOHNNY CARSON

"Dolly is a person of heart and spirit. She's not a political person, but we need more like her. She is profound and she has a really, really huge heart, and she's really smart and deeply spiritual."

JANE FONDA, *TO* THE NEW YORKER

"WHEN DOLLY PARTON CALLS, YOU SAY YES! PLAYING JOLENE [IN NETFLIX'S HEARTSTRINGS SERIES], WHICH IS DOLLY'S MOST RECORDED SONG EVER, WAS INCREDIBLE. AND SINGING WITH HER WAS MIND-BLOWING. SHE'S SO WELCOMING. I GOT UP ON STAGE AND WE HAD INSTANT CHEMISTRY."

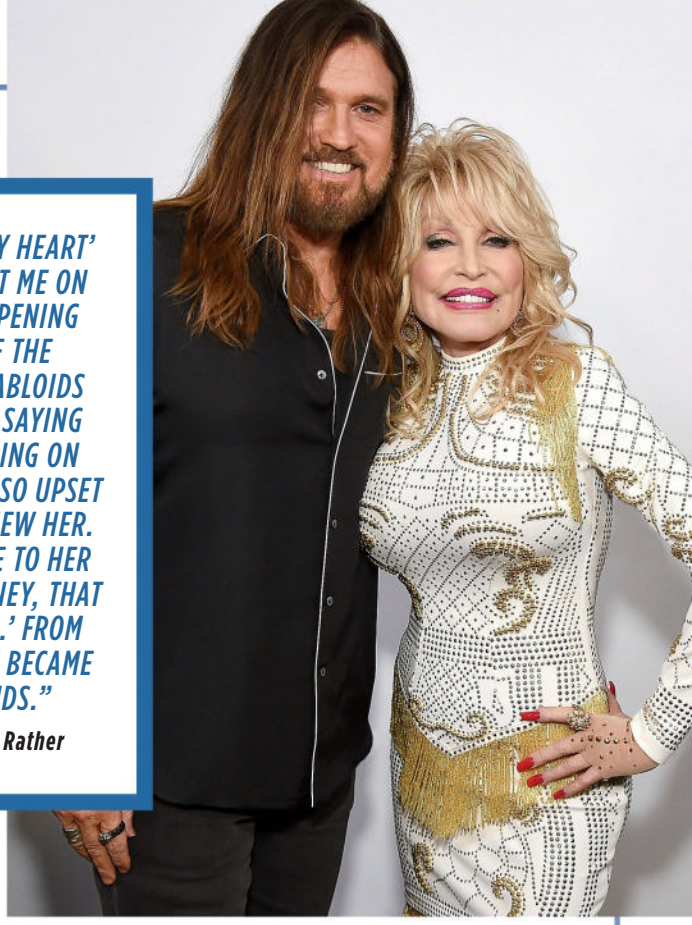
Julianne Hough, on AOL Build

"The first time I met Dolly she said, 'You could play me,' and I thought, 'I could play you!' I'm as tall as her, but I am lacking in a couple things, I think you know what I'm talking about. She calls hers Shock and Awe, and I call mine Dumb and Dumber."

Kristin Chenoweth, to Larry King

"Everyone thought we were having an affair, but we didn't, we just teased each other for 30 years. It keeps a lot tension in there. But I've always been in love with Dolly, in a very safe place. It's hard to really know her and not love her because she's the most unpretentious person I've ever met."

KENNY ROGERS, ON THE BOBBY BONES SHOW



"I've never seen 9 to 5. I know she's a huge star and she's this icon, but I've just always loved her as a great songwriter. And she's one of the best singers, ever. I think she's just amazing, so I've always loved her music."

NORAH JONES, TO TALKASIA/CNN

"WHEN 'ACHY BREAKY HEART' CAME OUT, DOLLY PUT ME ON HER TOUR AS HER OPENING ACT. BUT SOME OF THE HEADLINES IN THE TABLOIDS HAD DOLLY AND ME, SAYING SOMETHING WAS GOING ON [BETWEEN US]. I WAS SO UPSET BECAUSE I BARELY KNEW HER. I WENT TO APOLOGIZE TO HER AND DOLLY SAID, 'HONEY, THAT SH-- SELLS RECORDS.' FROM THAT MOMENT ON WE BECAME VERY GOOD FRIENDS."

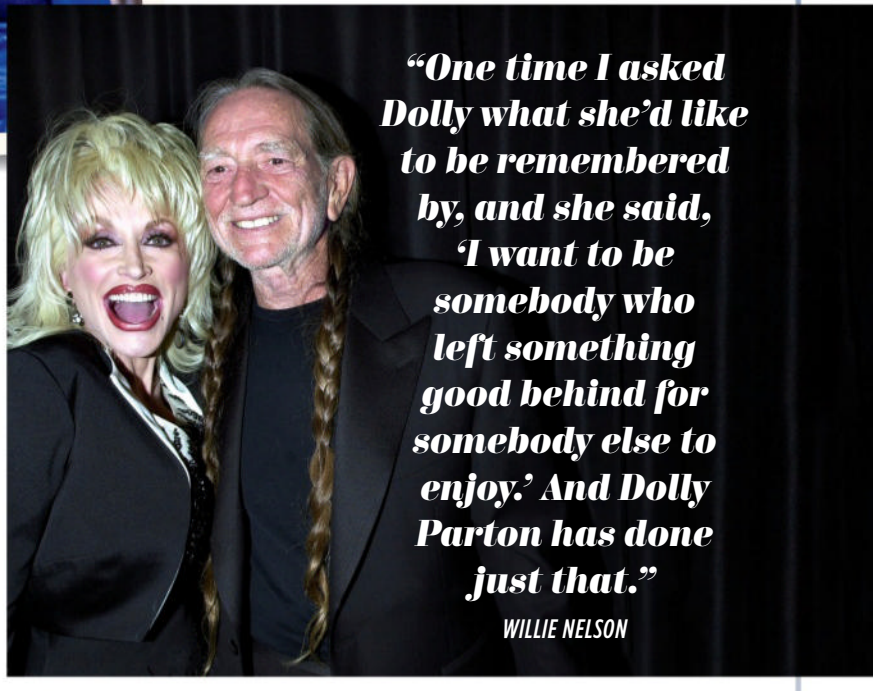
Billy Ray Cyrus, to Dan Rather

"The effortless queen of song, Dolly Parton! We love you! We wish we could possess an ounce of your ability. A hero of my life. I will always love you x."

Adele, on her Instagram

"I was probably 5 years old when I knew I wanted to be Dolly Parton. I was skipping around the blacktop at school by myself, and my P.E. teacher said, 'Why aren't you playing the game [with the other kids]?' I said, 'Well, I'm not going to play the game because, Ms. Wright, I'm going to be Dolly Parton when I grow up.'"

Reese Witherspoon, on her talk show **Hello Sunshine!**



"One time I asked Dolly what she'd like to be remembered by, and she said, 'I want to be somebody who left something good behind for somebody else to enjoy.' And Dolly Parton has done just that."

WILLIE NELSON

HER GREATEST GIFTS

GOOD GOLLY, Buy Dolly

You'll have to wait to dress up and wig out like the superstar until her new lifestyle and fashion line kicks off next year, but meanwhile here's the best of the beauty's bounty. BY ZAK WOJNAR

1 MOSCOW MULE MUG
Designed for Moscow Mule purists, but you can put anything in it, from apple juice to PBR, depending on your mood! **$25, *shop.dollyparton.com***

2 DOLLY *FOUR-CD SET*
With this musical anthology, you'll be a Parton scholar in no time! **$39, *amazon.com***

3 A HOLLY DOLLY CHRISTMAS
Dolly's first holiday album in three decades features duets with Willie Nelson, Miley Cyrus and Michael Bublé. Available on vinyl, CD and digital. **Starting at $10, *shop.dollyparton.com***

4 *SMIRK POPSOCKETS ELECTRONICS STAND*
Get Dolly on your phone, for form and function. **$15, *amazon.com***

5 *DOLLY PARTON FOR PRESIDENT T-SHIRT*
She's the hero we need in today's troubled times. **$20, *amazon.com***

6 *EMBROIDERED DAD HAT*
This colorful cap is great for someone who wants to express their love for Dolly, loud and proud! **$25, *shop.dollyparton.com***

7 *DOLLY SIGNATURE CLEAR VINYL TOTE BAG*
Perfect for your groceries, wigs or anything else. **$30, *shop.dollyparton.com***

8 *MOVIE POSTERS*
These plus-sized posters celebrate Dolly's biggest Hollywood hits. **Starting at $14, *amazon.com***

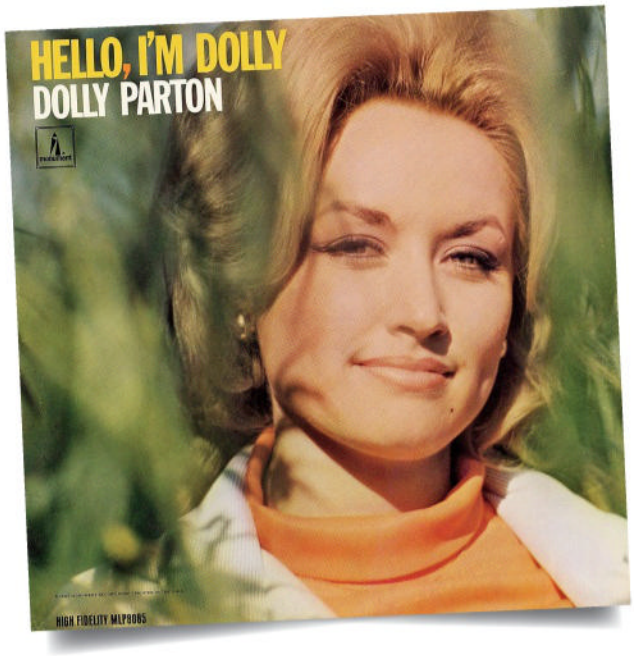
HONESTLY SPEAKING

"Sometimes things pop out of my mouth that almost scare me," Dolly admitted to *Goldmine*. "I think, You ought to keep your big mouth shut! But why can't I say what's on my mind?"

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

THE ULTIMATE Dolly Quiz

How smart are you about this "dumb blonde?" BY CLAIRE CONNORS



BIG DEBUT
The singer's first album, 1967's *Hello, I'm Dolly*, produced two Top 40 hits on the Country Charts, "Dumb Blonde" and "Something Fishy."

1 In what great southern state was the talented singer born?
a. Kentucky
b. Mississippi
c. Tennessee
d. Alabama

2 What is Dolly's middle name?
a. Maybelline
b. Clementine
c. Stella
d. Rebecca

3 How old was she when her first album, *Hello, I'm Dolly,* was released?
a. 13
b. 18
c. 21
d. 24

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

4 **What was Dolly's very first recording?**
a. "Puppy Love"
b. "Jolene"
c. "Dumb Blonde"
d. "Just Because I'm a Woman"

5 **Dolly first gained fame as a songwriter, not a singer.**
True or False

6 **Dolly once asked this celebrated "Man in Black" for his career advice.**
a. Johnny Cash
b. Porter Wagoner
c. Hugh Hefner
d. Mac Davis

7 **What is the name of the theme park based on her life?**
a. Hello, Dolly
b. Parton Park
c. Howdy Tennessee Playpark
d. Dollywood

8 What movie was her biggest hit?

a. *Straight Talk*

b. *Rhinestone*

c. *9 to 5*

d. *Joyful Noise*

9 **What is the name of Dolly's biggest hit song?**
a. "Islands in the Stream"
b. "Two Doors Down"
c. "You Don't Own Me"
d. "I Will Always Love You"

10 **Dolly once lost a Dolly Parton look-a-like contest.**
True or False

11 **How did Dolly's daddy pay the doctor on the day of her birth?**
a. A sack of cornmeal
b. A bushel of cotton
c. Cold, hard cash
d. A bottle of moonshine

12 **Who is Carl Dean?**
a. Dolly's uncle
b. Dolly's husband
c. Dolly's bodyguard
d. Dolly's manager

13 **Dolly was rumored to be having an affair with whom?**
a. Kenny Rogers
b. Sylvester Stallone
c. Burt Reynolds
d. All of the above

14 **Dolly's production company, Sandollar, produced the TV series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.**
True or False

15 **Dolly has been married three times.**
True or False

16 **How many albums has Dolly sold worldwide?**
a. 100 million
b. 1 million
c. 100,000
d. Half a billion

17 **Dolly wrote her first big hit, "Dumb Blonde" in 1967.**
True or False

18 **Dolly, the cloned sheep, was named after Dolly Parton.**
True or False

19 **How many Grammys has Dolly won?**
a. 99
b. 13
c. 34
d. Zero

20 **What is the name of the charity closest to Dolly's heart?**
a. Imagination Library
b. The Library of Congress
c. The American Cancer Society
d. The Grand Ole Opry

RIDE OR DIE
A very rare sighting of Dolly on one of her amusement park's attractions.

21 **Which famous Dolly song was inspired by a pretty and flirtatious banker?**
a. "Two Doors Down"
b. "I Will Always Love You"
c. "Transamerica"
d. "Jolene"

22 **What TV movie is based on Dolly's children's book and hit song?**
a. *A Coat of Many Colors*
b. *Straight Talk*
c. *A Smoky Mountain Christmas*
d. *Steel Magnolias*

23 **In what year was Dolly inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame?**
a. 1999
b. 1975
c. 2016
d. She has not been inducted yet!

24 **Which Netflix eight-part series is inspired by Dolly's songs and lyrics?**
a. *Dumplin'*
b. *Heartstrings*
c. *A Coat of Many Colors*
d. *9 to 5*

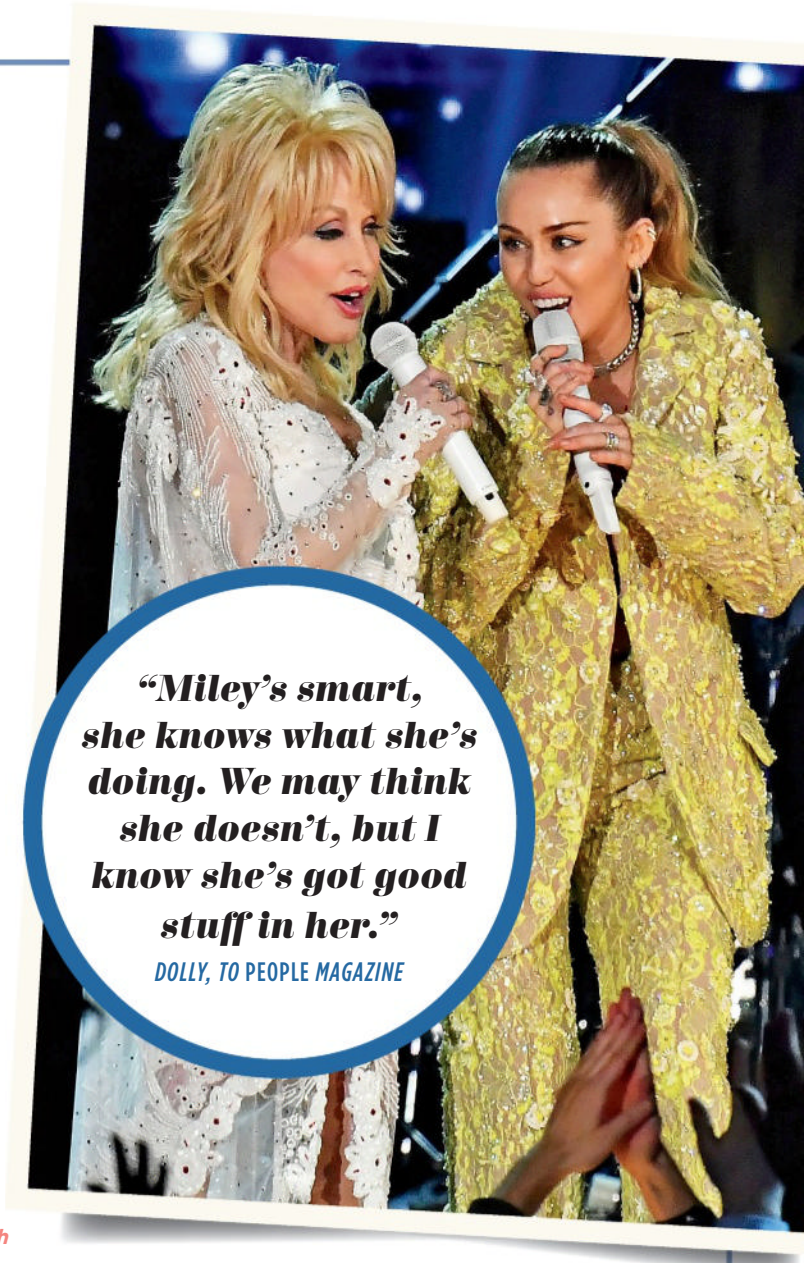
25 **Dolly's first movie was...**
a. *Gnomeo & Juliet*
b. *Steel Magnolias*
c. *9 to 5*
d. *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*

26 **Who recorded "I Will Always Love You" first?**
a. Whitney Houston
b. Patsy Cline
c. Linda Ronstadt
d. Dolly Parton

27 **What singer has been nominated for more Grammys than Dolly?**
a. Beyoncé
b. Diana Ross
c. Tina Turner
d. Celine Dion

28 **When was Dolly born?**
a. July 4, 1950
b. Oct. 31, 1947
c. Dec. 25, 1949
d. Jan. 19, 1946

29 **Former *Hannah Montana* star Miley Cyrus is Dolly's granddaughter.**
True or False



"Miley's smart, she knows what she's doing. We may think she doesn't, but I know she's got good stuff in her."
DOLLY, TO PEOPLE *MAGAZINE*

IDOL WORSHIP
"Her career has been so lasting and incredible," Miley Cyrus raves about Dolly's talents. "[And] she's just the best living angel on earth."

30 **Who gave Dolly her first big break on television?**

a. Porter Wagoner

b. Johnny Cash

c. Kenny Rogers

d. Merle Haggard

1. C; 2. D; 3. C; 4. A; 5. TRUE; 6. A; 7. D; 8. C; 9. D; 10. TRUE; 11. A; 12. B; 13. D; 14. TRUE; 15. FALSE; 16. A; 17. FALSE; 18. TRUE; 19. B; 20. A; 21. D; 22. A; 23. A; 24. B; 25. C; 26. D; 27. A; 28. D; 29. FALSE; 30. A.

IN HER OWN WORDS

PARTON ME? DID SHE REALLY Say That?

Kenny Rogers put it best: "Dolly has no filter. If it goes in her mind, it goes out of her mouth. That's what makes her so special." We couldn't agree more. Enjoy her Dollyisms!

"I MIGHT LOOK LIKE A PHONY TO YOU NOW, BUT IF I START CHANGING THINGS, THEN I REALLY WOULD BE A PHONY. THIS IS WHO I AM. I SEE NO REASON THAT I HAVE TO LOOK LIKE A SCHOOL TEACHER. I'D RATHER LOOK LIKE A WHORE."

"I'm flashy and I'm flamboyant. Had I not been a girl, I definitely would have been a drag queen."

"We cannot direct the wind but we can adjust the sails."

"I've never met a man whose ass I couldn't kick if he didn't treat me with the right respect."

"I was the first woman to burn my bra. It took the fire department four days to put it out!"

"The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain."

"I was told Dolly the cloned sheep was called after me because she had big mammary glands. I never met her but I always said there's no such thing as baaad publicity."

"I do have some tattoos. They're pretty and artful, ribbons and bows and butterflies. I was very sick and had to wear a feeding tube. It left a little indention on my side. I didn't like it so I had a little beehive tattooed over it. I like to make positives out of negatives."

"I count my blessings far more than I count my money."

"IN THE TABLOIDS, THEY'VE HAD PICTURES OF MY BUS DRIVER SAYING THAT WAS MY HUSBAND. I'VE HAD ABOUT FIVE HUSBANDS IN THE TABLOIDS. I'VE ONLY HAD ONE FOR REAL, BUT HE GETS A KICK OUT OF SOME OF THEM."

CENTENNIAL SPOTLIGHT®

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Queen OF COUNTRY

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COUNTRY STRONG
"I like what I do. I like who I am and I know who I am," Dolly has said.

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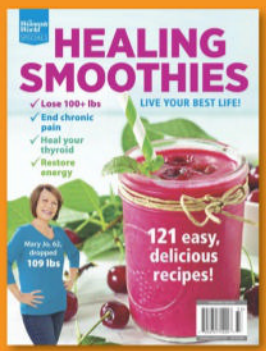

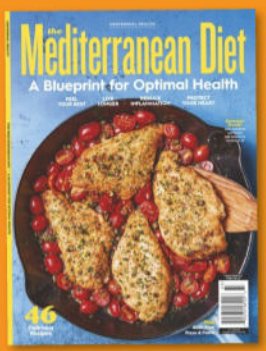

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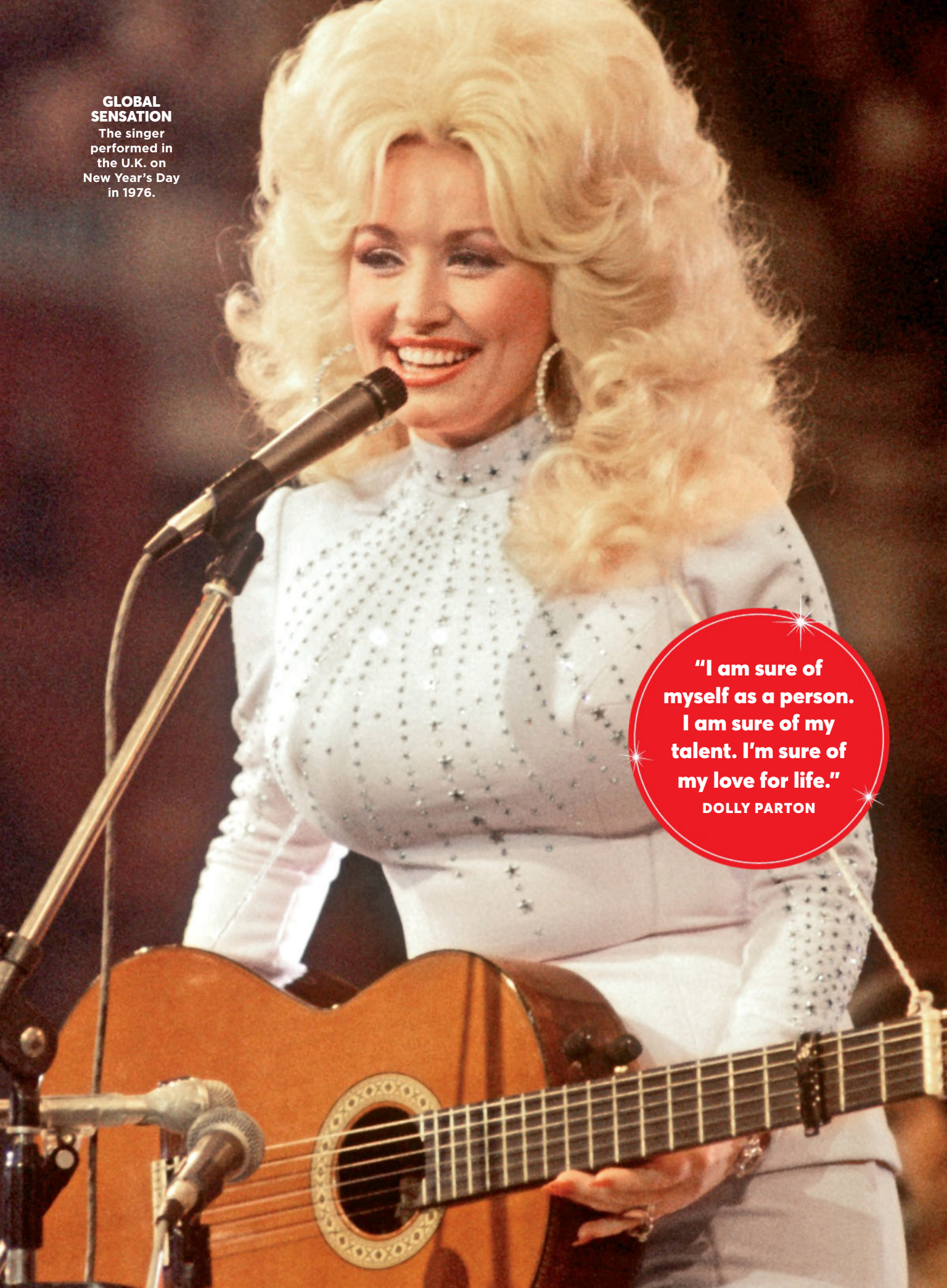

GLOBAL SENSATION
The singer performed in the U.K. on New Year's Day in 1976.

"I am sure of myself as a person. I am sure of my talent. I'm sure of my love for life."
DOLLY PARTON